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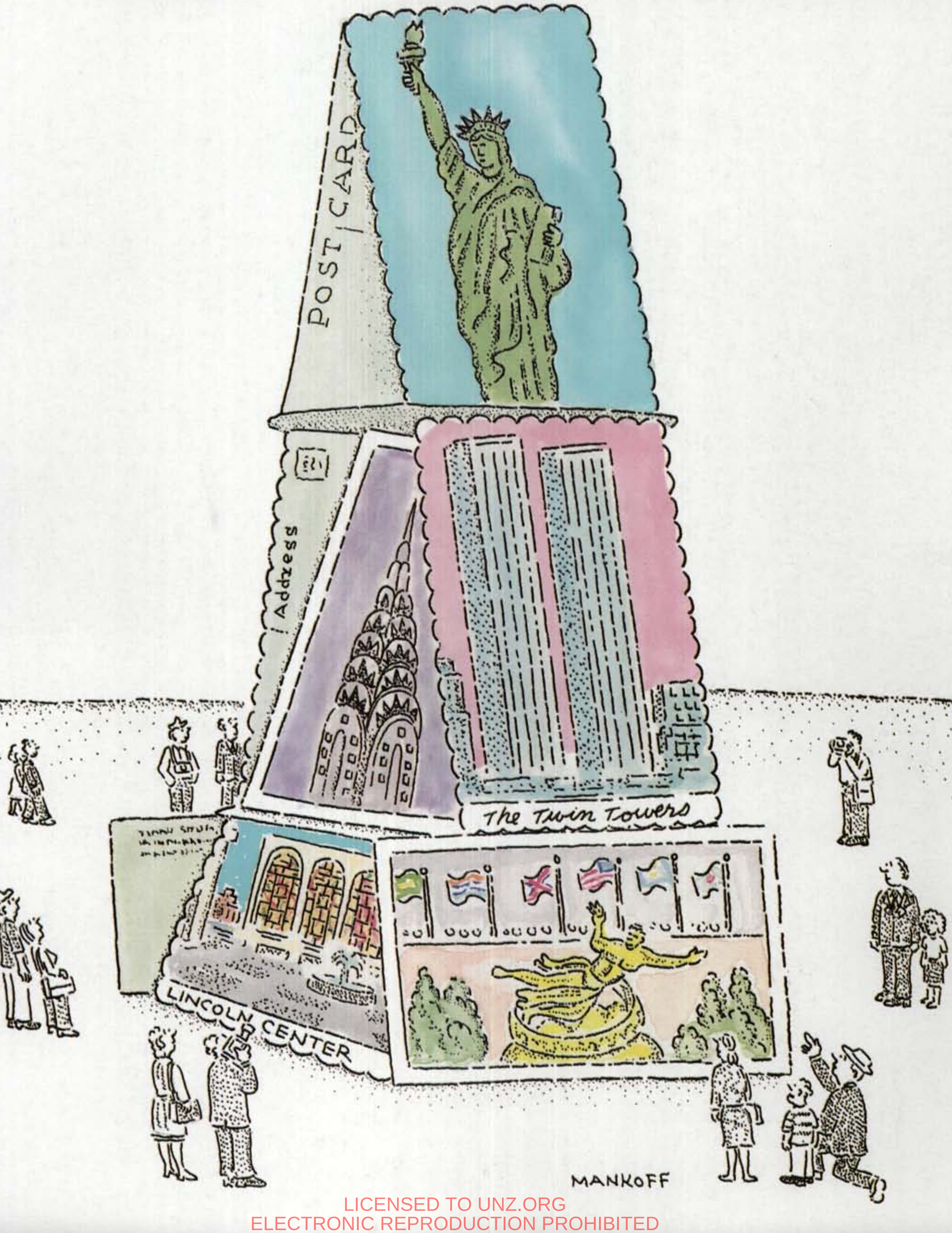
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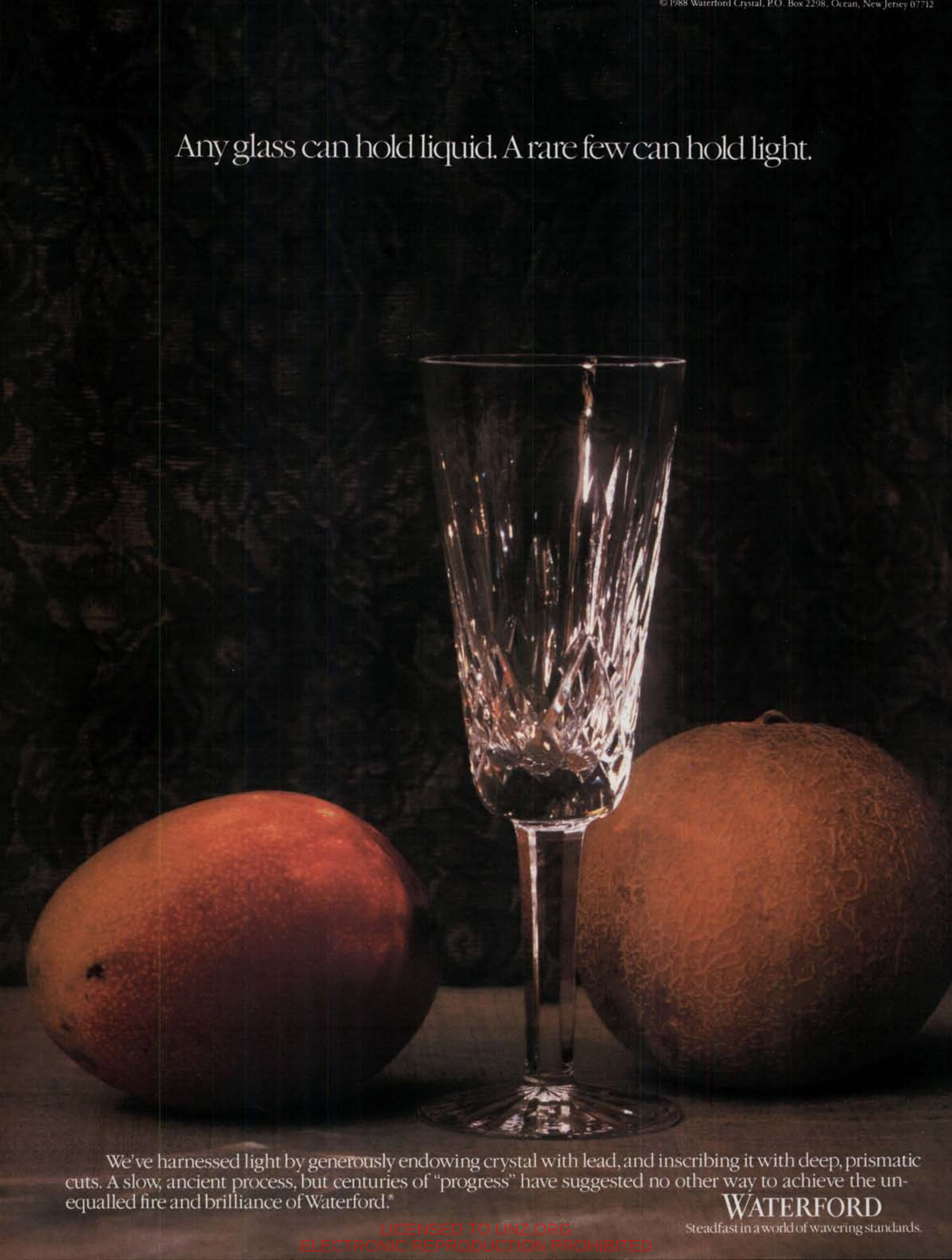
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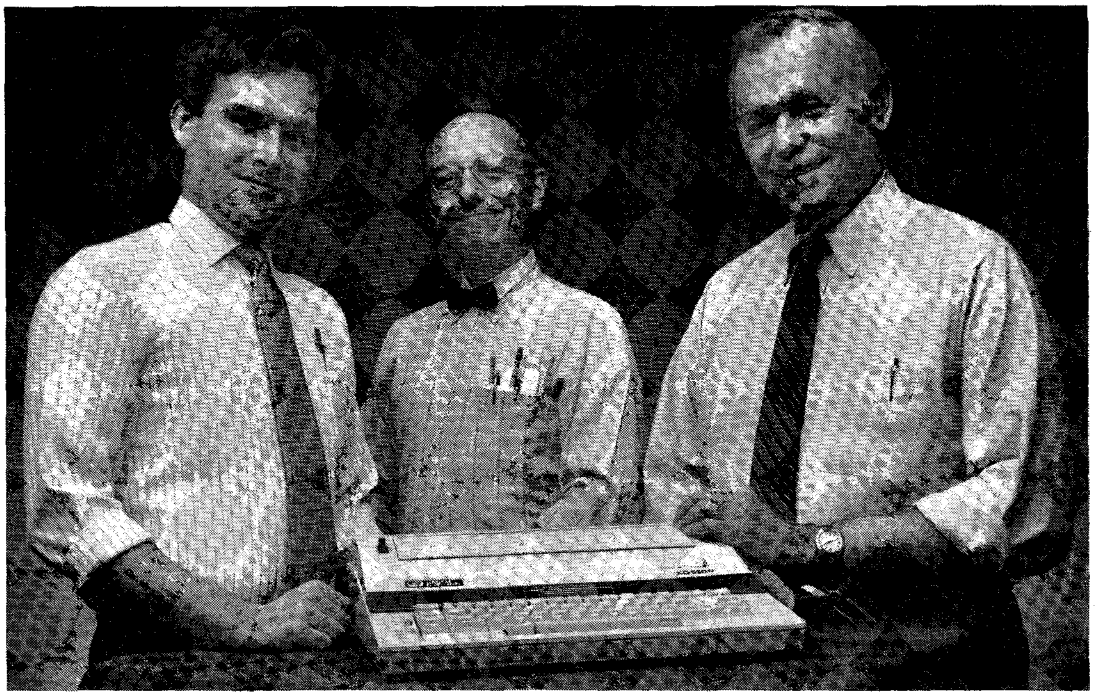

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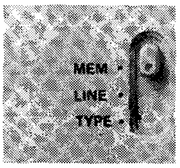

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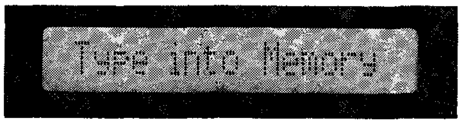

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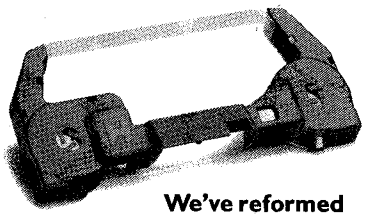

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Ain't Misbehavin'—A revival of the 1978 musical, with the original Broadway cast: Nell Carter, Andre De Shields, Armelia McQueen, Ken Page, and Charlaine Woodard. Directed by Richard Maltby, Jr. Opens Monday, Aug. 15, at 6:45. (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays, except Aug. 16, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 3.)

Checkmates—A comedy by Ron Milner. With Ruby Dee, Marsha Jackson, Denzel Washington, and Paul Winfield; directed by Woodie King, Jr. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Godspell—A revival of the 1971 musical by Stephen Schwartz and John-Michael Tebelak. (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

M. Butterfly—David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play is based on an actual case. A French diplomat takes as his mistress a star of the Beijing Opera, and some twenty years later—when they are both charged with being spies—discovers that "she" is a he. John Lithgow, in the leading role, gives an exceptional performance, and so does B. D. Wong as his lover. Lori Tan Chinn, George N. Martin, and Rose Gregorio give them sound support. Starting Monday, Aug. 22, David Dukes replaces Mr. Lithgow. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/4/88.) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

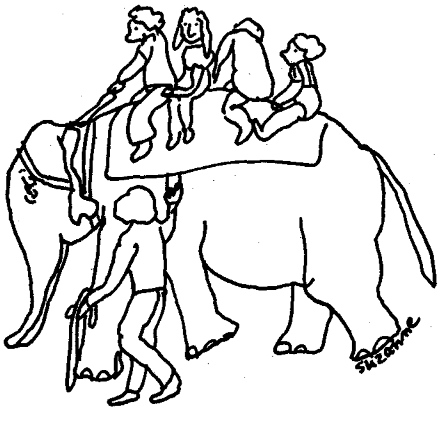
The Mistress of the Inn—Carlo Goldoni's 1753 play, with Tovah Feldshuh. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 2.)

Negro Ensemble Company—Presenting **from the mississippi delta,** a play by Endesha Ida Mae Holland, which was seen last fall at the Henry Street Settlement. Previews Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 17-18. Opens officially on Friday, Aug. 19. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

The Night of the Iguana—Except for the performances of Jane Alexander and Maria Tucci, this revival of Tennessee Williams' play is disappointing. (7/11/88) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Paul Robeson—A play by Phillip Hayes Dean, with Avery Brooks in the title role. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Phantom of the Opera—The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun —if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets (by Maria Björnson), everything about the show is negligible, including the overhyped performance of Michael Crawford in the title role. (2/8/88) (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)



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Road—This poignant and exhilarating new play by Jim Cartwright takes the audience on a night prowl through a Lancashire slum and, by implication, on a spiritual tour of depressed Thatcherite England. The play is performed promenade style (the audience has the option of sitting or joining the actors onstage) by an exceptionally able cast. The production is not seamless, but it features some amazingly good acting, most notably from Kevin Bacon, Joan Cusack, Michael Wincott, and Jayne Haynes. Lincoln Center produced this interesting piece of theatre, which was directed by Simon Curtis, of the Royal Court Theatre in London. Miss Cusack leaves the show after Sunday, Aug. 21. (8/15/88) (La Mama Annex, 66 E. 4th St. 475-7710. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

The Road to Mecca—An absorbing, if somewhat elusive, play by the South African dramatist Athol Fugard, about an aging woman sculptor who is mystical and independent, and who resists the attempts of a local minister to persuade her to go into an old-people's home. With Yvonne Bryceland, Mr. Fugard himself, and Kathy Bates, as a young disciple of the sculptor. Mr. Fugard directed. (4/25/88) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Romance/Romance—A pair of charming one-act musicals that have travelled successfully from Off to Broadway. Scott Bakula and Alison Fraser are as romantic as required in the leading roles. Barry Harman wrote the clever books and lyrics, and Keith Herrmann wrote the engaging scores. Mr. Harman directed. (5/16/88) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Speed-the-Plow—David Mamet's satire on Hollywood is just as scathing, just as acute as his "Glengarry Glen Ross," and even funnier, if that can be imagined. Under the direction of Gregory Mosher, Joe Mantegna and Ron Silver give stunning performances as a pair of sleazy producers, and Madonna does well, too, as a wide-eyed secretary. (5/16/88) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6277. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Long Runs—**anything goes:** This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Bill McCutcheon, Howard McGillin, Patti LuPone, Anthony Heald, and Kathleen Mahony-Bennett, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **broadway bound:** In the third of his trilogy of autobiographical plays, Neil Simon takes us from Brooklyn to Manhattan, from ignominy to the promise of fame. Joan Rivers plays the mother; Gene Saks was the director. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays and Monday, Aug. 15, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Sunday, Aug. 21, at 3.) . . . **burn this:** A play by Lanford Wilson, with Eric Roberts as a foulmouthed restaurant manager who woos and wins his dead brother's dancing partner. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **cats:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery and costumes by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **driving miss daisy:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **the fantasticks:** This longest of long runs recently had its twenty-eighth birthday. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42nd street:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8:15. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:15, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **frankie and johnny in the clair de lune:** Carol Kane and Bruce Weitz in Terrence McNally's enchanting comedy about sex and the sudden onset of love in an apartment on Tenth Avenue. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Sundays at 7 and 10. Matinées Wednesdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **into the woods:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. With Dick Cavett as the Narrator. Directed by Mr. Lapine. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **me and my girl:** A fifty-year-old British musical starring Jim Dale. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **les misérables:** Tim Shew and Norman Large star in the musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel, but the real standouts of the production are the settings, by John Napier, and the lighting, by David Hersey. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2.) . . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **oil city symphony:** Mike Craver, Mark Hardwick, Debra Monk, and Mary Murfitt, gifted and sophisticated singers and instrumentalists, appear as a quartet of dedicated hicks reuniting at their small-town high school in this very funny musical. (Circle in the Square Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. 254-6330. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **sarafina!:** This South African musical, an explosion of talent, was conceived, written, and directed by Mbongeni Ngema, who also, with Hugh Masekela, composed and arranged the score. The acting, dancing, and singing, to a local form of popular music called Mbaqanga, are a wonder. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sun-

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE–Cont'd

days at 3.) . . . **A SHAYNA MAIDEL:** A well-wrought and deeply moving play by Barbara Lebow about a Polish-Jewish family torn apart by the events of the Hitler era. The production is beautifully directed by Mary B. Robinson. *Bring lots of Kleenex to this one,* but expect to leave uplifted. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STARLIGHT EXPRESS:** A bore on roller skates. (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana, and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 6 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

FESTIVAL LATINO IN NEW YORK—A theatrical *celebración,* featuring plays from Latin America, Spain, and the United States. Unless otherwise noted, all performances are in Spanish. The schedule: "El Martirio del Pastor," a play by Samuel Rovinski. A production of Costa Rica's Compañía Nacional de Teatro. Monday through Sunday, Aug. 15-21, at 8. (Simultaneous-translation sets available Aug. 20-21.) . . . ¶ "Mariameneo, Mariameneo," a play written and directed by Juan Sánchez; presented by Spain's La Zaranda company. Monday through Friday, Aug. 15-19, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 20-21, at 3 and 8. (Simultaneous-translation sets available Aug. 20-21.) . . . ¶ "Bang Bang Blues," a play by Charles Gomez. In English. Wednesday, Aug. 24, at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes Sunday, Aug. 28.) . . . **NOTE:** There is also a program of Latin-American films at the Public through Sunday, Aug. 21.

STRANGER HERE MYSELF—Angelina Réaux in a one-woman revue of twenty songs by Kurt Weill. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7. Closes Sunday, Aug. 28.)

WITHOUT YOU I'M NOTHING—Sandra Bernhard in a one-woman show. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Fridays and Saturdays at 8 and 10:30; and Sundays at 5:30 and 9.)

TEN PERCENT REVUE—A musical revue by Tom Wilson Weinberg about gay life. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 4.)

THE TAFFETAS—A revue of songs from the early fifties. Four female singers reprise the hits of Rosemary Clooney, Jo Stafford, the Lennon Sisters, and others. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

DANCE

GEORGIAN STATE DANCE COMPANY—A troupe of eighty-one Russian folk dancers in a three-week engagement that opens Tuesday, Aug. 16, and runs through Sunday, Sept. 4. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 246-0102. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautically appointed bar and restaurant. Any swaying you may notice yourself doing is probably generated by the musicians, who perform amidships on a railed-in platform. Clarinettist **PERRY ROBINSON** directs a quartet Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20. First set at ten.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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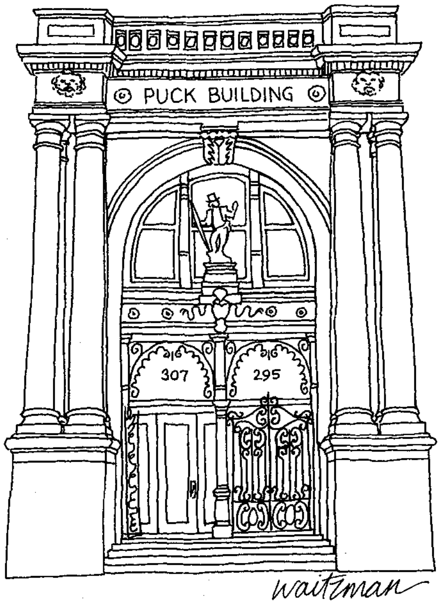
BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, near the flower and fur markets. **BLOSSOM DEARIE'S** small, *delicate voice, a precision instrument, can be* heard here Wednesdays through Saturdays. Her concerts, as she calls her shows, commence at six-thirty and end before darkness has advanced too far. A musical-comedy trio from London called Fascinating Aida performs at nine Tuesdays through Saturdays.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—A fledgling jazz operation that could easily be mistaken for a yuppie bar. The scenery includes waiters and waitresses in bowling shirts, some trees, and some nice-looking neon wading birds. A hard-bop quintet run by **BILL HARDMAN** (trumpet) and **JUNIOR COOK** (tenor saxophone) will be on the bandstand Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, *131 W. 3rd St.,* near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A bemirrored jazz club with a piece of neon art on the back wall (the Manhattan skyline and attendant celestial bodies) and with clusters of musicians on the dais. **BOBBY BLUE BLAND,** an old mellow-toned blues singer who cites Perry Como and Tony Bennett as influences, shares the stage Tuesday through Sunday, Aug. 16-21, with a West Coast swing-blues band led by **JEANNIE CHEATHAM** (piano and vocals) and her husband, **JIMMY CHEATHAM** (bass trombone). Music from nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Bruce Springsteen played here in 1975 and, eyewitnesses say, just about blew the house down; Tony Bennett sang here in 1981; and Dan Hicks, the toast of the folk-swing circuit, spent a night here in 1987. ("Howdja hear about *this?*" *Hicks asked the* audience, a small one.) In between and since, big stars and little stars, people with interesting haircuts and people with no hair have come and gone. The lineup: Wednesday, Aug. 17, country-rock singer Nicolette Larson; Thursday, Aug. 18, **DEFUNKT,** a jazz-funk operation led by trombonist **JOSEPH BOWIE;** Friday, Aug. 19, jazz guitarist **KEVIN EUBANKS** and violinist **JOHN BLAKE;** and Saturday, Aug. 20, **SUN RA** and his disciples. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.



BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A Village bar that has long featured first-rate piano-bass teams and pro conversationalists and that now also features Bradley's T-shirts, Bradley's sweatshirts, Bradley's customized coasters, horn players, a person to take an admission fee, and a person to seat you and shush you. It's an institution. Pianist **KENNY BARRON** and bassist **HARVIE SWARTZ** are on duty through Saturday, Aug. 20; **JIMMY KNEPPER,** a trombonist who looks like a science teacher and plays like a wizard, leads a trio on Sunday, Aug. 21. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS *I,* *432* Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—It's so nice in here—silken woodwork and long tables with pink tablecloths and pink napkins—you might mistake it for a jazz club on a movie set but for the real musicians onstage. **JIMMY HAMILTON,** a pure-toned clarinettist who played in the Ellington band from 1942 to 1968, shares a sextet with **AARON BELL,** a former Ellington bassist (1960-62) who also plays piano, Tuesday through Sunday, Aug. 16-21. **AHMAD JAMAL,** a show-boating romantic pianist, comes in with his trio on Tuesday, Aug. 23. Jamal is a pianist whose effusions are meant to be seen—even his silences are florid. He hops from one end of the piano bench to the other while exploring all registers; he turns sideways to the piano and plays something delicate; he leans back, crosses his feet, and shows you what a *piece of cake concertizing is; he mops himself* off with a towel and rises from the bench to admire the efforts of his sidemen. Music from nine-thirty. Dining.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Trumpeter and percussionist **JERRY GONZALEZ** and a Latin-jazz band will be in this red-velvet-and-mirror-walled room Tuesday through Sunday, Aug. 16-21; drummer **CHICO HAMILTON** brings in a quartet on Tuesday, Aug. 23. Mondays remain in the hands of guitarist **LES PAUL.** Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—Two nice things not known to be available in the next world—Chinese cooking and American jazz—are here, under a greenhouse roof giving on to some prime midtown airspace. **ADAM MAKOWICZ,** a pianist with a formidable, concert-hall technique, is on hand Tuesday through Sunday, Aug. 16-21; **KENNY BARRON** takes over on Tuesday, Aug. 23. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

JAN WALLMAN'S, 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—A room fit for a singer, an accompanist or two, and a party of forty-eight. Mondays belong to **ARTHUR SIEGEL,** a veteran music-theatre man whose sets ramble pleasantly from little-known show tune to little-known movie number; Tuesdays have been set aside for trumpeter **DICK SUDHALTER** and his two sidekicks, **MARTY GROSZ** (guitar and vocals) and **MURRAY WALL** (bass); **AL CARMINES,** whose shows are likely to include blues, hymns (he's a preacher), Tin Pan Alley songs, and numbers from his own Off-Broadway musicals, performs on Thursday, Aug. 18. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining. Closed Sundays.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant low-key bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **DON FRIEDMAN** and **MICHAEL FORMANEK** are the piano-bass team Tuesday through Saturday, Aug. 16-20. **HARRY CONNICK, JR.,** the latest good news to come up the river from New Orleans, sings and plays the piano on Sunday and Monday, Aug. 21-22. Music from about nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., *near* Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A second-floor music and performing space, where people come to ponder the meaning of harmolodics and the post-ness of postmodernism. The room is run by two amiable young guys from Wisconsin, whose views on such things as cover charges are enlightened. **EUGENE CHADBOURNE,** a locally trained combination of protest singer and C. & W. nut and avant-garde guitarist-noisemaker, has the floor on Monday, Aug. 15. Chadbourne's style is a mixture of homemade and antic; in addition to guitar and banjo, he plays a Duchampian found instrument called a lap steel rake and has in his wardrobe a coat with mousetrap epaulets (to catch the gag mice running all over it). Just about everything he touches—from "Purple Haze" to "Oh Yoko" to "Ramblin' Man"—he eventually deflates. **SHELLEY HIRSCH**, who makes many curious sounds with her experimentalist's voice and makes some of them curiouser still by altering them electronically, performs on Tuesday, Aug. 16. **JEAN-PAUL BOURELLY**, a young Chicago guitarist steeped in Hendrix and distortion techniques, leads a group on Saturday, Aug. 20. Guitarist **SONNY SHARROCK**, long a champion of yowling abrasiveness, brings in a band on Wednesday, Aug. 24. Music after nine.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—Scary-movie buffs like the epic-size iguana on the roof; Texans like the reminders of home; and musicians like the Texans, the New Yorkers, and the other visitors from this planet who regularly fill the joint up. **ROBERT GORDON**, a rockabilly devotee, performs Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20; three veteran bluesmen—guitarists **JIMMY ROGERS** and **HUBERT SUMLIN** and pianist **PINETOP PERKINS**—will be on the premises on Monday, Aug. 22. Music after nine. Dining. Closed Sunday, Aug. 21.

LONE STAR CAFÉ ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The midtown branch of the aforementioned honky-tonk. The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician tools around in. The inside is upscale roadhouse; it has a couple of postage-stamp dance floors and some real pretty Gibson guitars decorating the walls. **EMMYLOU HARRIS** sings of country things in her high, finespun voice on Thursday, Aug. 18. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Not far from this pub's gabbing crowds, a string band modelled after Django Reinhardt's Hot Club quintet performs. **FRANK VIGNOLA**, a fleet young guitarist from Long Island, is the Reinhardt of the group; they'll be joined by a ham named **PHOEBE LÉGÈRE**, whose assorted talents (she plays piano and accordion, has a voice of impressive size, and does campy variations on a red-hot-mama theme) have made her a favorite in downtown spas as well as in swell rooms such as this one. Sets at nine and eleven. **JOAN RIVERS**, a professional gabber, talks to you at around eleven-thirty, after the young people have retired for the night. Dining. Closed Sundays.

MIKELL'S, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—Jazz and jazz-enriched music (jazz-rock, Latin jazz, jazz-funk) to eat and drink to. **MICHEL CAMILO**, a Dominican-born pianist who likes demon-fast tempos and the loud pedal, leads his trio Thursday through Saturday, Aug. 18-20. Two eighties-period Miles Davis associates—saxophonist **BOB BERG** and guitarist **MIKE STERN**—come in with a band on Wednesday, Aug. 24. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Traditional jazz (big- and little-band Swing, several varieties of Dixieland) in the theatre district, and not a bad place to calm down in if, for instance, you happen to have just dropped a week's wages by taking the missus and your aunt from Macon to see a Broadway musical. Music from six on Sundays, from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays.

RITZ, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock and roll of the present moment—and occasionally of the Classical Era (the fifties), the Romantic Era (the sixties), and the OPEC Era (the seventies)—in a big, fancy thirties-era ballroom. **RANKING ROGER**, who sang and chanted with the English Beat, the ska-pop band born in Birmingham in the late seventies, holds forth on Thursday, Aug. 18; the **RAMONES**, the mop-topped Forest Hills lads whose two-minute ditties set noise and speed records back in the early days of punk, play for the faithful Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A musical melting pot: samba bands, African pop bands, reggae people, zydeco outfits, and salsa ensembles all pass through this former luncheonette. The schedule: Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 17-18, the **BHUNDU BOYS**, a Zimbabwean pop band; Saturday, Aug. 20, **PÉ-DE-BOI**; Tuesday, Aug. 23, **HENRY THREADGILL'S SOCIETY SITUATION DANCE BAND**; and Wednesday and Thursday, Aug. 24-25, reggae singer **SUGAR MINOTT**. Music from nine Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten Fridays and Saturdays. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A knotty-pine-and-brick-walled *boîte*, crowded with jazz fans from Japan, France, Germany, Denmark, Greenwich Village, and other countries. **ABDULLAH IBRAHIM**, a South African pianist and composer, is here with his septet, **EKAYA**, Tuesdays through Sundays. Ibrahim, who was known as Dollar Brand when Duke Ellington took him under his wing in the sixties and whose early work is full of Afro-gospel high spirits, has lately taken to writing meditative, somewhat melancholy music; he himself is a picture of quiet on the bandstand. First set at ten. Dining.

TRAMPS, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple, no-frills blues and rock club attached to an Irish pub. **CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE**, a blues harpist who, like his contemporary Paul Butterfield, studied under Little Walter, leads a band here on Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20. Music after nine-thirty.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the downstairs room, which is as big and plain as a mess hall, flutist **DAVE VALENTIN'S** band trades sets with bassist **EDDIE GOMEZ'S** quartet Tuesday through Sunday, Aug. 16-21; the **DIRTY DOZEN BRASS BAND**, a New Orleans marching-and-dancing octet whose repertoire runs from "Didn't He Ramble" to Monk and James Brown, comes in for six nights starting Tuesday, Aug. 23. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now in its second half century, this establishment has been described by Max Gordon, the wise, elfin, cigar-smoking proprietor, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." **DAVID MURRAY**, a thirty-three-year-old tenor saxophonist in whom you can hear traces of the now old New Musical Left (Albert Ayler, Archie Shepp) and more of the imperious swagger of Coleman Hawkins, leads a quartet Tuesday through Sunday, Aug. 16-21. On Tuesday, Aug. 23, **DON CHERRY** arrives with his pocket trumpet (with which he sometimes constructs miniature, fleeting melodies), two of his mates from the 1959 Ornette Coleman quartet (bassist **CHARLIE HADEN** and drummer **BILLY HIGGINS**), and a Texas tenor man named **JAMES CLAY**. Mondays are reserved for the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music after ten.

WEST END, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—A Columbia University watering hole, with a room set aside for jazz scholars. In the seventies, it served as a home for famous, elderly Swing men; nowadays, most of the musicians are tenured professors of modernism. Bassist **MICKEY BASS** leads a quintet Wednesday through Saturday, Aug. 17-20; vibraphonist **JAY HOGGARD'S** quartet moves in on Wednesday, Aug. 24. Music from about nine. Dining.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A bright, spacious, lightly forested bar and restaurant with an in-between room from which music issues, putting an end to some discussions and inspiring others. Pianist **JAMES WILLIAMS** and bassist **MILT HINTON** work together through Saturday, Aug. 20; **RUBY BRAFF**, who likes to speak low on his cornet, brings in a trio on Monday, Aug. 22. Music from eight. Closed Sundays.

JAZZ / ROCK / PERSONAL APPEARANCES / PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

GEORGE MICHAEL—Madison Square Garden. 563-8300. Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 15-16, at 8.

STEVE WINWOOD—With Colin James. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Tuesday through Friday, Aug. 16-19, at 8.)

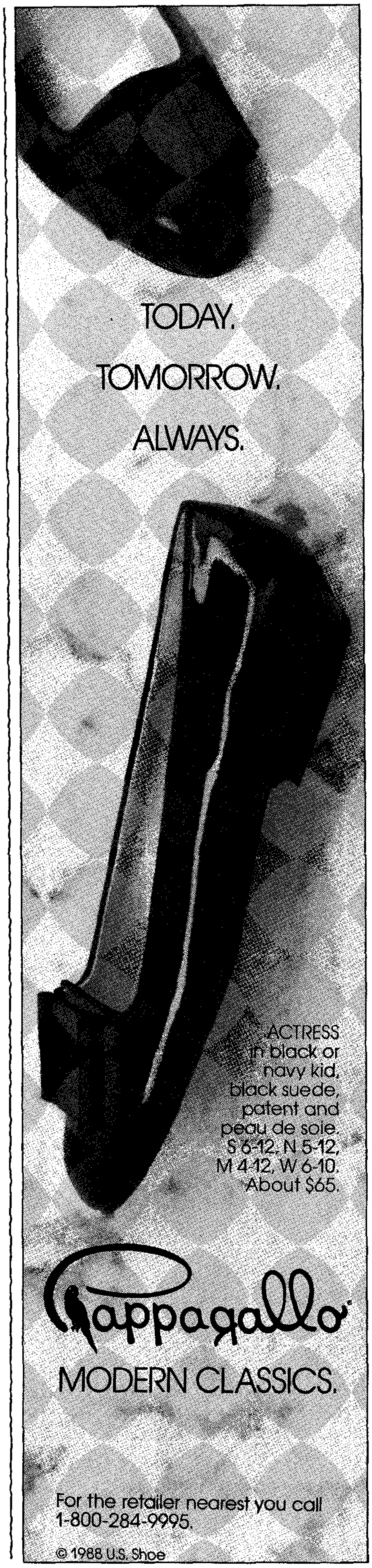
NATALIE COLE—With Najee. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Friday, Aug. 19, at 7:30 and 11.)

DIZZY GILLESPIE—With the United Nation Festival Super Band. (Lehman College Concert Hall, the Bronx. 960-8833. Saturday, Aug. 20, at 8.)

STEVIE WONDER—Radio City Music Hall. Monday and Tuesday, Aug. 22-23, at 8. Through Thursday, Sept. 1.

STING—Madison Square Garden. Wednesday, Aug. 24, at 8.

P.S. 122—Eric Bogosian. (Thursday and Friday, Aug. 18-19, at 9, and Saturday, Aug. 20, at 9



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

and 11. Through Saturday, Sept. 3.) . . . ¶ Ethyl Eichelberger. (Thursday through Sunday, Aug. 18-21, at 9:30. Through Sunday, Aug. 28.) (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

José Campeche (1751-1809)—A Puerto Rican who recorded the high society of San Juan in his portraits. Forty-seven of his paintings are currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum. Through Sept. 25. (Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Ave., at 104th St. Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

Joseph Cornell (1903-72)—Collages from the sixties. Through Wednesday, Aug. 24. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Julio González (1876-1942)—Paintings and drawings. Through Friday, Aug. 19. (Kent, 41 E. 57th St.)

Nancy Graves / John Walker—Small-scale sculptures in sterling silver. / Monoprints. Through Sept. 2. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Oliver Johnson—New paintings and drawings. Through Aug. 26. (Felicie, 141 E. 56th St.)

Group Shows—At the **bernard**, 33 E. 74th St.: Paintings, drawings, and sculptures by Louise Nevelson, Jean Dubuffet, and Boris Zaborov, among others. Through Aug. 31. . . . **davidson**, 415 West Broadway: Still-lifes on canvas and on paper by Carol Anthony, Deborah Deichler, Janis Goodman, Ruth Miller, and George Stave. Through Sept. 2. . . . **gibson**, 568 Broadway: Paintings in various mediums, including pieces by Merrill Wagner and Suzan Etkin. Through Aug. 26. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **graham**, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.: Paintings by Eleanor de Laittre, Alice Trumbull Mason, and Agnes Weinrich, among others. Through Oct. 1. . . . **herstand**, 24 W. 57th St.: Sculptures and drawings by Auguste Rodin, Isamu Noguchi, and Jenny Lee, among others. Through Sept. 16.

¶ Exhibitions of works by gallery artists can also be seen at **davis & langdale**, 231 E. 60th St. . . . **fischbach**, 24 W. 57th St. . . . **galerie st. etienne**, 24 W. 57th St. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **hoffman**, 429 West Broadway. . . . **katzen-brown**, 475 Broome St. . . . **marcus**, 578 Broadway. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **nosei**, 100 Prince St. . . . **pretto**, 103 Sullivan St. (Opens at 1 Tuesdays through Saturdays.) . . . **holly solomon**, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. . . . **washburn**, 41 E. 57th St.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Joan Fontcuberta—Photographs by an artist whose work is collaged and frottaged. Through Sept. 10. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Robert Mapplethorpe—The Whitney Museum has mounted a show of his photographs. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Garry Winogrand (1928-84)—Black-and-white photographs dating from the fifties, sixties, and seventies. Through Aug. 31. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St. Open Saturdays.)

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Collaboration in Recent American Photography," including works by Laurie Simmons and Allan McCollum, Clegg & Guttmann, and Suzanne Hellmuth and Jock Reynolds. . . . ¶ Photographs of North Korea by the Japanese photographer Hiroji Kubota. Both shows through Sept. 11. (Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Group Show—Photographs of planes, trains, and boats by Laura Gilpin, Robert Doisneau, André Kertész, and many others. Through Friday, Aug. 19. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Closed Mondays.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24			

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A hundred and fifty pieces of American silver, dating from the seventeenth century to the present. The exhibition includes works by Paul Revere and Tiffany & Co. Through Oct. 30. . . . ¶ Religious paintings and portraits by the eighteenth-century Puerto Rican artist José Campeche. Through Sept. 25. Works by the artist are also at the Museo del Barrio. (The Metropolitan is open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Deconstructivist Architecture," drawings, models, and site plans by Coop Himmelblau, Peter Eisenman, Frank Gehry, Zaha M. Hadid, Rem Koolhaas, Daniel Libeskind, and Bernard Tschumi. The chief organizer of the exhibit was Philip Johnson, who describes these architects as having eschewed harmony, unity, and clarity for the sake of disharmony, fracturing, and mystery. Through Aug. 30. . . . ¶ Ninety of Matisse's black-and-white prints, including etchings, lithographs, and monotypes. Through Nov. 6. . . . ¶ Landscapes rendered by Nachume Miller in paintings, oil sketches, and pencil studies. Through Oct. 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.) . . . **note:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10; on these nights musicians from the Juilliard School perform works by John Cage and others at 7:30.

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A retrospective of works by Georges Braque. Through Sept. 11. . . . ¶ A loan show of sixty modern paintings from the National Gallery in Prague, consisting entirely of works that are in America for the first time. The artists include Cézanne, Chagall, Klimt, Gauguin, and Matisse, and their Czech counterparts. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—Frank Gehry's architecture is surveyed in more than two hundred and fifty drawings, photographs, and models. The projects represented include the Fishdance Restaurant in Kobe, Japan, and the Laser Laboratory Building at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. Also on display are several walk-through constructions. Through Oct. 2. . . . **photography:** Fifteen years' worth of Robert Mapplethorpe's prints are represented in a show of nudes, portraits, and still-lifes. Through Oct. 23. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"The Uses of Photography in Contemporary Art," a small exhibit from the permanent collection, with works by Julie Wachtel, Ellen Carey, and David Hockney. Through Oct. 10. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Fossils from China—including several dicynodonts that are about two hundred and fifty million years old—along with some of their North American counterparts taken from the museum's collection. . . . ¶ Three Buddhist monks, including Lobsang Samten—an attendant to the Dalai Lama—create a sand mandala before your eyes. The sand men do not create on Mondays. Through Sunday, Aug. 21. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—A show on the contemporary partnership between artists and architects, focussing on the artists' contributions. There are, for instance, stone seats by Scott Burton that are like those he made for the Equitable Center, and objects in glass by three artists who worked on the redesigned Rainbow Room. Through Aug. 31. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Unbuilt Architecture of the Eighties," including models, drawings, and photographs by Philip Johnson, Alice Aycock, and Antoine Predock. Through Oct. 16. . . . ¶ The museum's garden is currently dotted with lawn chairs in every conceivable style. These bizarre—but comfortable—pieces are the work of thirty-one San Francisco Bay Area artists, including Martha Schwartz, Veronica di Rosa, and Daniel Friedlander. Through Sept. 18. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A retrospective of etchings, woodcuts, and lithographs by the English painter Graham Sutherland (1903-1980). The prints range from pastoral landscapes to expressionistic renderings of birds and insects. Through Sept. 30. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—A show in which Jewish themes are explored in video art: installations by Juan Downey, Beryl Korot, and Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman, mounted in separate galleries; and six videos that run on a single, continuous tape for just over two hours, including "Harold's Bar Mitzvah," by Bart Friedman, and "Women in the Camps," by Barbara Rosenthal. Through Sept. 1. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A comprehensive exhibit of the works of Beatrix Potter (1866-1943) which includes watercolors of her familiar subjects (Peter Rabbit, Jemima Puddle-Duck) and her not so familiar subjects—insects, plants, and fossils. Through Sunday, Aug. 21. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—"The Portrayal of the Black Musician in American Art," a show of paintings, sculptures, and lithographs dating from 1830 to 1970. Through Aug. 28. (Open daily except Mondays and Tuesdays. Hours: Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

SPORTS

Baseball—Yankees at Yankee Stadium (293-6000): Vs. California, Tuesday through Thursday, Aug. 16-18, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Seattle, Friday, Aug. 19, at 4:35 (doubleheader); Saturday, Aug. 20, at 7:30; and Sunday, Aug. 21, at 1:30.

Football—Giants vs. Pittsburgh Steelers, in an exhibition game. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. 1-201 935-3900. Saturday, Aug. 20, at 8.)

Racing—At **monmouth park**, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30; through Saturday, Sept. 3. . . . **atlantic city race course**, McKee City, N.J.: Mondays and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:15; through Saturday, Sept. 3. . . . **saratoga:** Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1:30; through Monday, Aug. 29. The Travers, Saturday, Aug. 20.

Trotting—At **meadowlands:** Weeknights at 7:30; through Friday, Aug. 19. . . . **yonkers raceway:** Weeknights at 8, and Tuesdays at 1. . . . **saratoga raceway,** Saratoga Springs: Weeknights at 7:45.

MUSIC

New York City Opera—Tuesday evening, Aug. 16: "Madame Butterfly," with Marianna Christos, Jane Bunnell, Stefano Algieri, and William Parcher; conducted by Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Aug. 17: "The Merry Widow," with Leigh Munro, Ruth Golden, Richard White, and Gran Wilson; Imre Pallo. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Aug. 18: "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Erie Mills, Michael Sylvester, William Stone, and Harry Dworchak; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Aug. 19: "Mefistofele," with Frances Ginsberg, John Cheek, and Robert Grayson. . . . ¶ Saturday matinée, Aug. 20: "La Bohème," with Elizabeth Holleque, Faith Esham, William Parcher, Stanley Wexler, and Michael Willson; Scott Bergeson. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Aug. 20: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," with Erie Mills, Jane Shaulis, Robert Orth, and Gran Wilson; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Tuesday evening, Aug. 23: "Mefistofele," with Frances Ginsberg, John Cheek, and Robert Grayson; Sergiu Comissiona. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Aug. 24: "Lucia di Lammermoor," with Erie Mills, Michael Sylvester, William Stone, and Harry Dworchak; Scott Bergeson. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Evenings at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Through Sunday, Nov. 20.)

Mostly Mozart Festival—Monday, Aug. 15, at 8: Kurt Masur conducting the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 16-17, at 8: Gunther Herbig conducting the Festival Orchestra, with Alicia de Larrocha, piano. . . . ¶ Thursday, Aug. 18, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Chicago Symphony Winds, with Garrick Ohlsson, piano, and vocal soloists. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20, at 8: First performances of a six-day Haydn blitz. Gunther Herbig conducting the Festival Orchestra, with Elmar Oliveira, violin, and Ken Noda, piano. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 21, at 2 and 7: A host of notable musicians playing some of Haydn's chamber and solo works. . . . ¶ Monday, Aug. 22, at 8: Kurt Masur conducting the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra in two symphonies and a cello concerto by Haydn. With Heinrich Schiff, cello. . . . ¶ Tuesday and Wednesday, Aug. 23-24, at 8: Gerard Schwarz conducting the Festival Orchestra, and Joseph Flummerfelt directing the Festival Chorus in a program that includes Haydn's "Lord Nelson Mass." With vocal and instrumental soloists. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Through Saturday, Aug. 27.)

Frank Patterson—Tenor. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. Wednesday, Aug. 17, at 5:30. For information about tickets, call 288-0700.)

Mary Ann Hart—Mezzo-soprano, with Susan Jolles, harp. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. Sunday, Aug. 21, at 7. No tickets necessary.)

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Central Park Zoo—More than four hundred and fifty animals are here, exploring their renovated habitats, and they are ready for the admiration of the public. (Fifth Ave. at 64th St. Mondays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 5:30.)

New York Philharmonic—Zubin Mehta conducting. (Central Park's Great Lawn. Monday, Aug. 15, at 8.)

New York Shakespeare Festival—Free performances of **king john,** with Mariette Hartley, Kevin Conway, and Moses Gunn. The second of two productions presented in the Delacorte Theatre this summer. (Central Park near W. 81st St. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Through Sunday, Sept. 4. For information about tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

Music Cruises—Monday, Aug. 15: Noel Pointer. Monday, Aug. 22: Kevin Eubanks, with the Larry Coryell quintet and Percy Jones. (On the De Witt Clinton, South Street Seaport, Pier 16, East River at Fulton St. The boat leaves at 7 and 10. For information about tickets, call 406-3434.) . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 19: The Count Basie Orchestra. (Hudson River Dayliner, Pier 81, Twelfth Ave. at 41st St. The boat boards at 8 and sails at 9. For tickets, call 947-5850.)

Washington Square Park—Final performance of the season—The Dean Pratt Big Band. (Tuesday, Aug. 16, at 8. In the event of rain, the concert will take place at Washington Square Church, 135 W. 4th St.)

Music Festival on the Pier—The Miller beer people's summer series. Thursday, Aug. 18: The Beach Boys and Hot Tuna. . . . ¶ Friday and Saturday, Aug. 19-20: Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble and Joe Satriani. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Aug. 24: Joan Armatrading. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Evenings at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 249-8870.)

Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center—Saturday, Aug. 20, at 8:15: Music by John Cage. With Isabelle Ganz, mezzo-soprano; Margaret Leng Tan, piano; Alvin Lucier, playing electronic devices; and others. Mr. Cage will be present. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 21, at 8:15: Tap dancing, with Alfred Desio, Linda Sohl-Donnell & Company, and others. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Aug. 23, at 8:15: Iso.

Central Park Band Shell—Friday, Aug. 19, at 9: Ping Chong & Company. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 20, at 3: Steve Elson's Lips & Fingers Ensemble, with Pierce Turner. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 21, at 3: The Bhundu Boys. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. For rain-date information, call 860-1335.)

Riverside Park Rotunda—Saturday, Aug. 20, at 7: Chamber Sound. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 21, at 4: Mel Lewis and the Jazz Orchestra. (W. 79th St. near the Boat Basin.)

IN THE COUNTRY

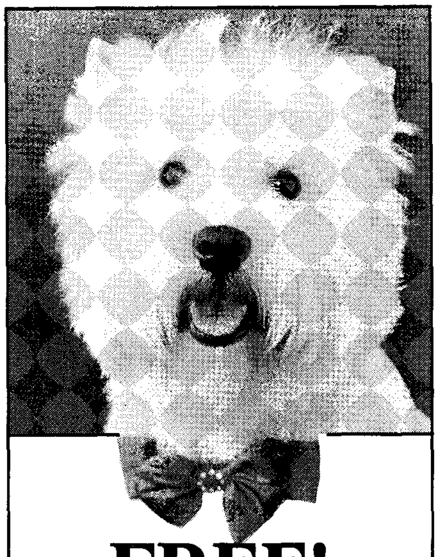
Caramoor Music Festival—Final performances of the season—Friday, Aug. 19, at 9: Three-fourths of the Guarneri Quartet, with Lydia Artymiw, piano, and Edgar Myer, double bass. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 20, at 8:30: The Count Basie Orchestra. . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 21, at 5:30: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble in an all-Vivaldi concert. (Katonah, N.Y. Trains leaving Grand Central Terminal on Saturday at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sunday at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

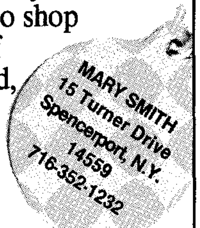
Tanglewood—The summer residence of the Boston Symphony. Wednesday, Aug. 17, at 8:30: Emanuel Ax, piano, and Yo-Yo Ma, cello. . . . ¶ Friday, Aug. 19, at 9: Jiri Belohlavek conducting the orchestra in an all-Mozart program, with Alicia de Larrocha, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday, Aug. 20, at 8:30: Jiri Belohlavek conducting the orchestra in a performance of Smetana's "Má Vlast." . . . ¶ Sunday, Aug. 21, at 2:30: Michael Tilson Thomas conducting a Sibelius-Stravinsky program, with Midori, violin. (Lenox, Mass. Through Sunday, Aug. 28. For information about tickets, call 1-413 243-0745.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Performances by the **philadelphia orchestra** continue through Saturday, Aug. 27. Wednesday evening, Aug. 17: Stanislaw Skrowaczewski conducting, with Norman Carol, violin. . . . ¶ Thursday evening, Aug. 18: Sergiu Comissiona conducting, with Yo-Yo Ma, cello. . . . ¶ Friday evening, Aug. 19: Dennis Russell Davies conducting, with Alexander Toradze, piano. . . . ¶ Saturday evening, Aug. 20: Dennis Russell Davies conducting. Halfway through the evening, Ray Charles and his orchestra will take over the stage. . . . ¶ Wednesday evening, Aug. 24: Leonard Slatkin conducting, with Christopher Parkening, classical guitarist. (Saratoga Springs. Evenings at 8:15. For information about tickets, call 1-518 587-3330.) . . . **note:** From Monday, Aug. 15, through Saturday, Aug. 20, the Mark Morris Dance Group will be performing in the Little Theatre. The Merce Cunningham Dance Company starts a one-week engagement on Monday, Aug. 22.

ET ALIA

Republican National Convention—Opens at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans on Monday, Aug. 15, at 10 A.M., C.D.T. President Reagan will speak that evening, and the keynote address, by Governor Thomas Kean, of New Jersey, will be delivered Tuesday evening, Aug. 16. The convention continues through Thursday, Aug. 18.





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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

EAST SIDE

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Aug. 21: A program of Latin-American films.
Aug. 22-25: Theatre temporarily closed.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard" (†).
Theatre 2: "Clean and Sober" (Glenn Gordon Caron), with Michael Keaton and Kathy Baker.
Theatre 3: "Clean and Sober."

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Die Hard" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy. From Aug. 19: "Married to the Mob" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Fish Called Wanda" (†).
Theatre 3: "Tucker: The Man and His Dream" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, and Elisabeth Shue.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Aug. 18: (Matinées only) "Bambi" (1942), a Walt Disney full-length film; and (evenings only) "The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.
From Aug. 19 (tentative): "Willow" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Through Aug. 18: (Matinées only) "The New Adventures of Pippi Longstocking" (Ken Annakin); and (evenings only) "Vibes" (Ken Kwapis), with Cyndi Lauper and Jeff Goldblum.
From Aug. 19: "The Big Blue" (Luc Besson), with Rosanna Arquette and Jean-Marc Barr.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Big" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Aug. 23: "The Rescue" (Ferdinand Fairfax).
From Aug. 24: "Crossing Delancey" (Joan Micklin Silver), with Amy Irving and Peter Riegert.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Midnight Run" (†).
Theatre 2: "Young Guns" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
Through Aug. 18: "Mac and Me" (Stewart Raffill).
From Aug. 19: To be announced.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard" (†).
Theatre 2: "Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Pascali's Island" (James Dearden), with Ben Kingsley, Charles Dance, and Helen Mirren.
Theatre 2: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, and Elisabeth Shue.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "The Blob" (Chuck Russell), with Kevin Dillon and Shawnee Smith.
Theatre 2: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Clean and Sober" (Glenn Gordon Caron), with Michael Keaton and Kathy Baker.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: "Bull Durham" (†). From Aug. 19: "Married to the Mob" (†).
Theatre 2: "Tucker: The Man and His Dream" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Mr. North" (Danny Huston), with Anthony Edwards.

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 12.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"A Fish Called Wanda" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Young Guns" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy. From Aug. 19 (tentative): "A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master" (Renny Harlin), with Robert Englund.
Theatre 2: "The Blob" (Chuck Russell), with Kevin Dillon and Shawnee Smith.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Die Hard" (†).
Theatre 2: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, and Elisabeth Shue.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatres open in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 16: "Alice" (†). From Aug. 17: "The Burglar" (1987; directed by Valery Ogorodnikov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: See listings under "Revival Houses."

Bleecker St. Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: "Family Viewing" (Atom Egoyan). From Aug. 19: "The Beer Drinker's Guide to Fitness and Filmmaking" (Fred G. Sullivan).
Theatre 2: "Late Summer Blues" (Renen Schorr; in Hebrew).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Young Guns" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.
Theatre 2: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, and Elisabeth Shue.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
"The Blob" (Chuck Russell), with Kevin Dillon and Shawnee Smith.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: "Shame" (Steve Jodrell). From Aug. 19: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "A Summer Story" (Piers Haggard), with Imogen Stubbs and James Wilby.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 16: "Bambi" (1952), a Walt Disney full-length film; and "Vibes" (Ken Kwapis), with Cyndi Lauper and Jeff Goldblum. From Aug. 17: "Alice" (†).
Theatre 4: "A World Apart" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: (Matinées only) "The Rescue" (Ferdinand Fairfax); and (evenings only) "Bull Durham" (†). From Aug. 19: "A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master" (Renny Harlin), with Robert Englund.
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 18: "Mac and Me" (Stewart Raffill). From Aug. 19: "The Big Blue" (Luc Besson), with Rosanna Arquette and Jean-Marc Barr.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Mac and Me" (Stewart Raffill).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Last Temptation of Christ" (Martin Scorsese), with Willem Dafoe.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"A World Apart" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through Aug. 16: "Shame" (Steve Jodrell).
From Aug. 17: "The Wash" (Michael Toshiyuki Uno).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"A Summer Story" (Piers Haggard), with Imogen Stubbs and James Wilby.

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Au Revoir les Enfants" ("Goodbye, Children") (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through Aug. 23: "A Handful of Dust" (†).
From Aug. 24: "Bandits" (Claude Lelouch; in French).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"White Mischief" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"A Fish Called Wanda" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Commissar" (1967; Alexander Askoldov; in Russian).
Theatre 2: "Bagdad Café" (†).
Theatre 3: "Boyfriends and Girlfriends" ("L'Ami de Mon Amie") (†).

Cinema Studio I and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Babette's Feast" (†).
Theatre 2: "Wings of Desire" ("Der Himmel über Berlin") (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, and Elisabeth Shue.

Embassy 72nd St. I and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: "Big" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Rescue" (Ferdinand Fairfax).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Clean and Sober" (Glenn Gordon Caron), with Michael Keaton and Kathy Baker.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 18: "Bull Durham" (†). From Aug. 19 (tentative): "The Big Blue" (Luc Besson), with Rosanna Arquette and Jean-Marc Barr.
Theatre 4: "Tucker: The Man and His Dream" (†).
Theatre 5: Through Aug. 18: "Mac and Me" (Stewart Raffill). From Aug. 19 (tentative): "A Nighmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master" (Renny Harlin), with Robert Englund.
Theatre 6: Through Aug. 18: "The Blob"

(Chuck Russell), with Kevin Dillon and Shawnee Smith. From Aug. 19: "Married to the Mob" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Young Guns" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.
Theatre 2: "Young Guns."

Columbia Cinema, B'way at 103rd. (316-6660)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Midnight Run" (†).
Theatre 2: "Die Hard" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 18: "Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear" (directed by George A. Romero). From Aug. 19: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
Theatre 2: "Young Guns" (Christopher Cain), with Emilio Estevez.
Theatre 3: "The Blob" (Chuck Russell), with Kevin Dillon and Shawnee Smith.
Theatre 4: Through Aug. 18: "Red Heat" (Walter Hill), with Arnold Schwarzenegger and Jim Belushi. From Aug. 19: "Coming to America."
Theatre 5: "Die Hard" (†).
Theatre 6: "Bull Durham" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
"Who Framed Roger Rabbit" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Cocktail" (Roger Donaldson), with Tom Cruise, Bryan Brown, and Elisabeth Shue.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 18: "Bambi" (1942), a Walt Disney full-length film. From Aug. 19: "Married to the Mob" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Rescue" (Ferdinand Fairfax).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
Through Aug. 18: "Coming to America" (John Landis), with Eddie Murphy.
From Aug. 19: "A Nightmare on Elm Street 4: The Dream Master" (Renny Harlin), with Robert Englund.

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)
Through Aug. 18: "Vibes" (Ken Kwapis), with Cyndi Lauper and Jeff Goldblum.
From Aug. 19: "The Big Blue" (Luc Besson), with Rosanna Arquette and Jean-Marc Barr.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Clean and Sober" (Glenn Gordon Caron), with Michael Keaton and Kathy Baker.
Theatre 2: "Midnight Run" (†).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
"The Dead Pool" (Buddy Van Horn), with Clint Eastwood.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Aug. 15: "Let's Dance" (1950; directed by Norman Z. McLeod), with Betty Hutton, Fred Astaire, Roland Young, and Ruth Warrick; and "Gold Diggers of 1933" (Mervyn LeRoy), with Ruby Keeler, Ginger Rogers, and Dick Powell.
Aug. 16: "Tales of Manhattan" (†); and "I'll Be Seeing You" (1945; William Dieterle), with Ginger Rogers, Joseph Cotten, and Shirley Temple.
Aug. 17-18: "The Pleasure of His Company" (1961; George Seaton), with Fred Astaire, Debbie Reynolds, and Lilli Palmer; and "Forever Female" (1954; Irving Rapper), with Ginger Rogers, William Holden, and Paul Douglas.
Aug. 19-20: "Carefree" (†) and "You'll Never Get Rich" (†).
Aug. 21-22: "Weekend at the Waldorf" (1945; Robert Z. Leonard), with Ginger Rogers, Walter Pidgeon, Lana Turner, and Van Johnson; and "We're Not Married" (1952; Edmund Goulding), with Ginger Rogers, Fred Allen, and Victor Moore.
Aug. 23-24: "Dancing Lady" (1933; Robert Z. Leonard), with Fred Astaire, Joan Crawford, Franchot Tone, and Clark Gable; and "Finian's Rainbow" (†).

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Aug. 16: Two programs of Warner Brothers cartoons shown each day—one program featuring the work of Tex Avery.
Aug. 17-18: "Lola" (1982; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German); and "Querelle" (1983; Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Brad Davis, Franco Nero, and Jeanne Moreau.
Aug. 19-20: "Powaqqatsi" (1988; Godfrey Reggio); and "Koyaanisqatsi" (1983; Godfrey Reggio).
Aug. 21: "Henry V" (†); and "Macbeth" (1948; Orson Welles), with Welles, Jeanette Nolan, Dan O'Herlihy, and Roddy McDowall.
Aug. 22-23: Two programs of Warner Brothers cartoons shown each day.
From Aug. 24: "Wall Street" (1987; Oliver Stone), with Michael Douglas, Charlie Sheen, Daryl Hannah, and Martin Sheen; and "Fatal Attraction" (1987; Adrian Lyne), with Michael Douglas, Glenn Close, and Anne Archer.

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Aug. 15: "Things to Come" (1936; William Cameron Menzies), with Raymond Massey and Ralph Richardson; "Chandu the Magician" (1932; William Cameron Menzies), with Bela Lugosi and Edmund Lowe; and "Just Imagine" (1930; David Butler), with El Brendel and Maureen O'Sullivan.
Aug. 16: "Fiend Without a Face" (1958; Andrew Crabtree), with Marshall Thompson; and "First Man Into Space" (1959; Robert Day), with Marshall Thompson.
Aug. 17: "Infra-Man" (1976; Hua Shan); and "The H-Man" (1959; Inoshiro Honda), with Yumi Shirakawa.
Aug. 18: "Deluge" (1933; Felix E. Feist); and "Captive Women" (1952; Stuart Gilmore).
Aug. 19: "Plan 9 from Outer Space" (1956; Edward D. Wood, Jr.), with Bela Lugosi; and "Mesa of Lost Women" (1952; Herbert Tevos and Ron Ormond).
Aug. 20-21: "Stalker" (1979; Andrei Tarkovsky).
Aug. 22: "Metropolis" (1926; Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm; and "The Woman in the Moon" (1929; Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Fritz Rasp.
Aug. 23: A program of Max and Dave Fleischer Superman cartoons from 1941 and 1942.
Aug. 24: "Jason and the Argonauts" (1963; Don Chaffey), with Todd Armstrong and Nancy Kovack; and "Jack the Giant Killer" (1962; Nathan Juran), with Kerwin Mathews and Judi Meredith.

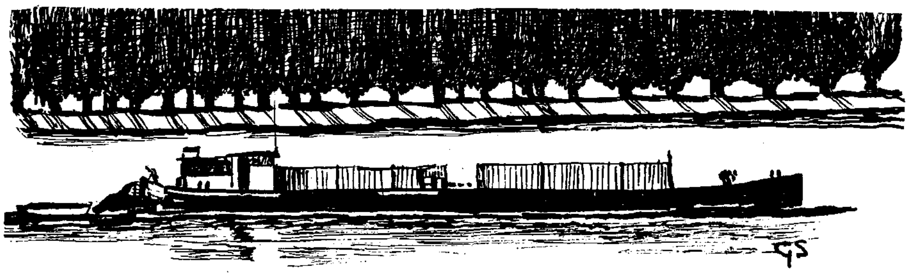
Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Aug. 15: "Nightfall" (1957; Jacques Tourneur), with Aldo Ray, Brian Keith, and Anne Bancroft; and "Uncle Harry" (1945; Robert Siodmak), with George Sanders, Geraldine Fitzgerald, and Ella Raines.
Aug. 16: "Road House" (1948; Jean Negulesco), with Ida Lupino, Richard Widmark, Cornel Wilde, and Celeste Holm; and "Moontide" (1942; Archie Mayo), with Jean Gabin and Ida Lupino.
Aug. 17: "Le Corbeau" ("The Raven;" 1943; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Pierre Fresnay and Ginette Leclerc; and "Manon" (1949; Henri-Georges Clouzot; in French), with Cécile Aubry, Michel Auclair, and Serge Reggiani.
Aug. 18: "The Big Heat" (1953; Fritz Lang), with Glenn Ford, Gloria Grahame, Alexander Scourby, and Lee Marvin; and "Human Desire" (1954; Fritz Lang), with Glenn Ford, Gloria Grahame, and Broderick Crawford.
Aug. 19-20: "Sign 'O' the Times" (1987; Prince), with Prince; and "Purple Rain" (†).
Aug. 21: "We Still Kill the Old Way" (†); and "The Climax" (1967; Pietro Germi; in Italian), with Ugo Tognazzi.
Aug. 22: "Union Station" (1950; Rudolph Maté), with William Holden, Lyle Bettger, Nancy Olson, and Barry Fitzgerald; and "D.O.A." (1950; Rudolph Maté), with Edmond O'Brien.
Aug. 23: "Keep on Rockin' " (1973), a film of the Sept. 1969 Toronto Rock and Roll concert; and "Rock Around the Clock" (1956; Fred F. Sears), with Johnny Johnston, Alan Freed, and Bill Haley and His Comets.
Aug. 24: "Beyond the Forest" (†); and "The Fountainhead" (1949; King Vidor), with Gary Cooper, Patricia Neal, and Raymond Massey.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Aug. 15: "October" ("Ten Days That Shook the World;" 1927; Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film); and "Potemkin" (1925; Sergei Eisenstein; a Russian silent film).
Aug. 16: "How Green Was My Valley" (1941; John Ford), with Walter Pidgeon, Maureen O'Hara, Roddy McDowall, Sara Allgood, and Barry Fitzgerald; and "The Stars Look Down" (1939; Carol Reed), with Margaret Lockwood, Michael Redgrave, and Emlyn Williams.
Aug. 17: "Rope" (1948; Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, John Dall, and Farley Granger; and "Rear Window" (1954; Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, and Wendell Corey.
Aug. 18: "King Solomon's Mines" (1950; Compton Bennett and Andrew Marton), with Deborah Kerr, Stewart Granger, and Richard Carlson; and "Mogambo" (1953; John Ford), with Clark Gable, Ava Gardner, and Grace Kelly.
Aug. 19-20: "The Night of the Hunter" (1955; Charles Laughton), with Robert Mitchum, Shelley Winters, and Lillian Gish; and "Home from the Hill" (1960; Vincente Minnelli), with Robert Mitchum, Eleanor Parker, George Hamilton, and George Peppard.
Aug. 21: "O. Henry's Full House" (1952), five O. Henry stories, by five different directors; and "Tales of Manhattan" (†).
Aug. 22: "Playtime" (1968) and "Mr. Hulot's Holiday" (1953), both films directed by, and with, Jacques Tati.
Aug. 23: "The Painted Veil" (1934; Richard Boleslavsky), with Greta Garbo, Herbert Marshall, and George Brent; and "Mata Hari" (1932; George Fitzmaurice), with Greta Garbo, Ramon Novarro, and Lionel Barrymore.
Aug. 24: "The Lady Eve" (1941; Preston Sturges), with Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, and Charles Coburn; and "No Time for Comedy" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre I: Aug. 16 at 2:30: "Death Takes a Holiday" (1934; directed by Mitchell Leisen), with Fredric March, Evelyn Venable, and Kent Taylor. . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 6 and Aug. 18 at 2:30: "Specter of the Rose" (1946; Ben Hecht), with Judith Anderson, Michael Chekhov, and Lionel Stander; and screen tests made in 1937 by Luther Adler, Elia Kazan, and others. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 6: "Death Takes a Holiday." . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 2:30: "The Southerner" (1945; Jean Renoir), with Zachary Scott, Betty Field, and Beulah Bondi. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 6: "Glorifying the American Girl" (1929; Millard Webb), with Mary Eaton and Dan Healey. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2: "One Million B.C." (1940; Hal Roach, Sr., and Hal Roach, Jr.), with Victor Mature, Carole Landis, and Lon Chaney, Jr. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 5: "Strange Il-



lusion" ("Out of the Night;" 1945; Edgar G. Ulmer), with James Lyon, Warren William, and Regis Toomey; and "The Shining Future" (1944; LeRoy Prinz; a short film). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 2: "The Southerner." . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 5: "Dark Waters" (1944; André de Toth), with Merle Oberon, Franchot Tone, and Thomas Mitchell. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 2:30: "One Million B.C." . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 6: "Strange Illusion" and "The Shining Future." . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 2:30: "Glorifying the American Girl." . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 6: "Dark Command" (1940; Raoul Walsh), with Claire Trevor, John Wayne, and Walter Pidgeon.

THEATRE 2: Aug. 15 at 2:30: A program of silent serial films. . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 6: "The Reform Candidate" (1915; Frank Lloyd; a silent film), with Maclyn Arbuckle, Charles Ruggles, and Jane Darwell; and an episode from the 1915 serial "Who Pays?"

Film Society of Lincoln Center—A retrospective of films that have opened at the New Directors/New Films series and later films by some of the same directors. Aug. 15 at 6:15: "Idi Amin Dada" (1974; Barbet Schroeder). . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 8:30: "Barfly" (1987; Barbet Schroeder). . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 6:15: "The Funeral" (1984; Juzo Itami; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 8:45: "Tampopo" (1986; Juzo Itami; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 6:15: "El Super" (1978; Léon Ichaso and Orlando Jiménez-Leal; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 8:30: "Crossover Dreams" (1985; Léon Ichaso). . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 6:15: "The Consequence" (1978; Wolfgang Petersen; in German). . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 8:30: "Das Boot" (1981; Wolfgang Petersen; in German). . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 6:15: "Straight Through the Heart" (1983; Doris Dörrie; in German). . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 8:30: "Men" (1985; Doris Dörrie; in German). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2: "Muddy River" (1981; Kohei Oguri; in Japanese). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 4:15: "Hey Babu Riba" (1986; Yovan Acin; in Serbo-Croatian). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 6:45: "The Goalie's Anxiety at the Penalty Kick" (1971; Wim Wenders; in German). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 9: "Paris, Texas" (1984; Wim Wenders). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 2: "My Life as a Dog" (1985; Lasse Hallström; in Swedish). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 4:15: "Return of the Secaucus Seven" (1979; John Sayles). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 6:30: "Matewan" (1987; John Sayles). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 9:30: "The Brother from Another Planet" (1984; John Sayles). . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 6:15: "A Walk Through H" (1977; Peter Greenaway) and "Vertical Features Remake" (1978; Peter Greenaway). . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 8:30: "The Draughtsman's Contract" (1982; Peter Greenaway). . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 6:15: "Chan Is Missing" (1981; Wayne Wang). . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 8:30: "Dim Sum" (1984; Wayne Wang). . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 6:15: "Funny Dirty Little War" (1983; Hector Olivera; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 8:30: "They Don't Wear Black Tie" (1981; Leon Hirzman; a Brazilian film, in Portuguese). (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911.)

French Institute–Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—Aug. 17 at 12:15, 3:15, 6, and 9: "Angèle" (1934; Marcel Pagnol; in French, with English subtitles), with Orane Démazis, Andrex, Henri Poupon, Annie Toinon, Fernandel, and Jean Servais. . . . ¶ Aug. 24 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Harvest" (1937; Marcel Pagnol; in French, with English subtitles), with Gabriel Gabrio, Orane Démazis, Marguerite Moreno, Fernandel, and Robert Le Vigan.

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—Aug. 18 at 8: "Metropolis" (1927; Fritz Lang; a German silent film), with Brigitte Helm. Original organ score written and played by Lee Erwin.

Murder, Mystery and Mayhem—A series of films set in New York City during the thirties, forties, and fifties. Aug. 21 at 2: "Side Street" (1950; Anthony Mann), with Farley Granger and Cathy O'Donnell. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. 873-3400.)

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—Two parts of a program called "Woody Allen: The Television Work." Through Aug. 20: Allen's 1969 one-hour television special and a thirty-minute compilation of other appearances he made between 1958 and 1967. Showings Tuesday through Saturday at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:30. . . . Starting Aug. 23: "The Kraft Music Hall: Woody Allen Looks at 1967" and a compilation of performances of and conversations with Allen from 1962 to 1977. Showings Tuesdays through Saturdays at 12:05, 1:45, and 3:30. . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 5:30: "A Tribute to Rodgers and Hammerstein" (1954), with performances by Ezio Pinza, Gordon MacRae, Florence Henderson, and others.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(Unsigned notes are by Pauline Kael; others are by Terrence Rafferty.)

Alice—The Czech animator Jan Švankmajer plays with objects the way Lewis Carroll played with words, and creates out of Carroll's Wonderland a world of more ambiguous, more unsettling nonsense. Švankmajer, who animates household items and worn-looking dolls, makes nonsense physical, palpable, and thus gives Alice's adventures in illogic an undertone of menace. The landscape of Alice's imagination is a domestic maze of doors, drawers (the "rabbit-hole" she falls into is the shallow drawer of an old wooden table), stairs, hallways, cabinets, shelves, and doll houses. And in this world—the half-familiar, half-obscure territory of the shut-in child—everything has a heightened, shockingly vivid presence. We sense a kind of frenzy in this little girl's dream images: her fantasy universe is one of violence, confinement, and obsessive repetition. The director—a self-described "militant Surrealist," who has been making short films since 1964—brings a pessimistic, absurdist, Eastern European sensibility to bear on Carroll's material, and his approach sometimes seems overly formal, a little rigid. But this is an extraordinary piece of work. There are sequences that are small miracles of stop-motion animation: the White Rabbit has a pocket watch sewn into his tatty fur, so whenever he checks the time sawdust spills out of him and he has to close himself up with a safety pin; the Caterpillar, a woollen sock with a pair of glass eyes and a set of chattering false teeth, delivers his message to Alice and then, alarmingly, darns over his own eyes as he settles down to sleep. "Alice" is a film for children of a certain kind, for the quiet, solitary ones who spend hours in conversation with their dolls and who invest the smallest cast-off objects with secret significance. It's a brilliant demonstration of the connection between a child's imagination and the lonely, obsessive craftsmanship of a great animator. Alice is played by a big-eyed little girl named Kristýna Kohoutová; she's the only human being in the movie.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/8/88.) (Film Forum 1; through Aug. 16. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Aug. 17.)

Au Revoir les Enfants ("Goodbye, Children")—It's set in Occupied France in 1944, when the writer-director Louis Malle was an eleven-year-old at a Catholic boys' boarding school near Fontainebleau that sheltered several Jewish boys. The Gestapo learned they were there, and sent the ones they found to Auschwitz, and the headmaster to a work camp. One of the Jewish boys was in Malle's class, but Malle didn't get to know him well and didn't realize that he was Jewish. For the dramatic purposes of the movie, he has conceived a close friendship between his alter ego, the fair-haired Julien Quentin (Gaspard Manesse), and the dark boy who is using the false name Jean Bonnet (Raphaël Fejtö). But nothing comes into clear focus—not the boys' attitudes, not even the images. The film (especially the first half) seems padded, formal, discreet. It's like watching a faded French classic. And there's something unseemly about the way Jean is used as an aesthetic object—spiritual, sensitive, exotic. With Francine Racette as Julien's mother and François Négret as the informer. In French. (2/22/88) (Carnegie Screening Room.)

Babette's Feast—In a village on Denmark's gray, blustery Jutland peninsula, sometime in the eighteen-eighties, Babette (Stéphane Audran), the French servant of a pair of elderly unmarried sisters (Birgitte Federspiel and Bodil Kjer), prepares a special dinner for her employers and their guests—a lavish, one-time-only orgy of haute cuisine served to a group of devout Lutherans who are used to receiving the Lord's bounty in the form of grim little slabs of boiled fish. Adapting one of Isak Dinesen's "Anecdotes of Destiny," Gabriel Axel, the writer-director, tells this simple tale simply. He establishes a lulling, bedtime-story tone right from the start, perhaps too successfully: our eyelids begin to seem very heavy after twenty minutes or so. The whole thing turns out to be about the consolations of art, and the union of "righteousness and bliss." The film is more righteous than blissful: a more austere celebration of the pleasures of the senses would be difficult to imagine. In Danish and French. —T.R. (Cinema Studio.)

Bagdad Café—After an argument with her husband on a godforsaken stretch of highway at the edge of the Mojave Desert, a fat German tourist named Jasmin (Marianne Sägebrecht) checks into a crummy motel attached to the equally crummy Bagdad Café. This movie, the first in English by the German director Percy Adlon (whose 1985 "Sugarbaby" was also a vehicle for Sägebrecht), is filled with eccentrics who are apparently meant to be lovable. The rather precious conceit of the film is that Jasmin somehow brings the outcast characters together in a kind of extended family; by the end, the Bagdad Café has been transformed into a popular roadside cabaret, with everyone contributing a specialty (Jasmin does magic tricks). The American performers are trapped in a movie that treats them as merely exotic—waxwork grotesques waiting to be animated by a mysterious German touch. Eleonore Adlon and Christopher Doherty collaborated with the director on the screenplay. With CCH Pounder, Jack Palance, and Christine Kaufmann.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

Beyond the Forest (1949)—Consistently (though inadvertently) hilarious. An evil Emma Bovary, Bette Davis is a sloven married to a Midwestern doctor (Joseph Cotten); she treats him abominably, and every time she has a chance she surrenders herself with hysterical enthusiasm to the hot-eyed embraces of a Chicago magnate (David Brian). Her obsession is to blow town, join her lover, and be a fancy kept woman; she nearly obsesses the soundtrack with variations of "Chicago, Chicago." The director, King Vidor, seems to be inventing his own brand of hog-wild Expressionism; covered with droplets of erotic sweat, Davis shakes her ample hips, kills an old man (Minor Watson), plunges down a mountainside to end an unwanted pregnancy, and dies within sight of a choochoo pulling *out for Chicago, Chicago. With Dona Drake,* Ruth Roman, and Regis Toomey. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 24.)

Big—A formula fantasy film that has been directed very gently and tactfully by Penny Marshall; she sleepwalks you through the script (by Gary Ross and Anne Spielberg) about a twelve-year-old boy who wishes he were big and is magically given the body of a man in his thirties—Tom Hanks. There are neat, flaky moments, but everything has a tepid inevitability, and even as you smile you may be groaning inwardly, because "Big" is dedicated to awakening the child in all of us. Of course, the Hanks character isn't ready to function as an adult; he wants to go back. The movie wants to go back, too. It's nostalgic for childhood, for suburbia, for innocent fun. (It isn't about kids wanting to be big; it's about grownups feeling little.) In its wholesome way, "Big" is selling the slick wonders of immaturity. With the slyly sexy Elizabeth Perkins, and good comic work by Robert Loggia and Jared Rushton. Also with John Heard, David Moscow, Jon Lovitz, and Mercedes Ruehl. (6/27/88) (Gotham Cinema, Art Greenwich Twin, and Embassy 72nd St.)

Boyfriends and Girlfriends (“L’Ami de Mon Amie”)—The sixth, and last, in Eric Rohmer’s series of “Comedies and Proverbs” is a light romantic comedy set in Cergy-Pontoise, an overdesigned and self-contained modern suburb of Paris. In this bourgeois Forest of Arden, four completely unremarkable young people—two women, two men—reshuffle their affections so that each winds up with the “right” partner in the end. It’s essentially the same leisurely comedy of self-knowledge that Rohmer has been making for nearly twenty years, but this time he treats his themes with a frivolous, casual air. He takes pleasure in the cleanness and brightness of this world, in the contented buzz of shoppers and office workers and Sunday picnickers, in the forthright way his characters pursue their comforts. “Boyfriends and Girlfriends” is fluff: it’s artificial without being oppressive—a graceful, friendly abstraction. With Emmanuelle Chaulet, Sophie Renoir, François-Eric Gendron, and Eric Viellard. In French. —T.R. (7/25/88) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Bull Durham—Written and directed by Ron Shelton, this sunny romantic comedy has the kind of dizzying off-center literacy that Preston Sturges’ pictures had. It’s a satirical celebration of our native jauntiness and wit; it takes us into a subculture that’s like a bawdy adjunct of childhood—minor-league baseball. Kevin Costner plays the smart, hyperarticulate catcher Crash, and comes through with his first wide-awake, star performance; at his best, he’s as berserkly ironic as Jack Nicholson is at some of his peaks. After playing for twelve years, Crash arrives in Durham, North Carolina, to join the Durham Bulls and learns that he’s been brought in to train baby-faced Nuke (Tim Robbins), a wild young rookie pitcher who is destined to move up. Susan Sarandon plays the beautiful, passionate Annie Savoy, a baseball fanatic who has her own scorecard: “There’s never been a ballplayer slept with me who didn’t have the best year of his career.” What you keep reacting to is the film’s exuberant doodles. (6/27/88) (Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; through Aug. 18, evenings only. . . . ¶ Loews New York Twin, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex; through Aug. 18.)

Carefree (1938)—Fred Astaire plays a psychiatrist who was psychoanalyzed out of thinking he wanted to be a dancer; his friend, Ralph Bellamy, is in love with Ginger Rogers, who’s in show business. Ralph, who can’t get anywhere with Ginger, sends her to see Fred on a professional basis—to be cured of her indifference to him. Ginger begins to fall for Fred, but he hypnotizes her so that she’ll love Ralph; then Fred discovers that he’s in love with her himself. It sounds promising, in a chaotic sort of way, but this is one of the least scintillating of the Astaire-Rogers pictures; there’s too much plot and too much leaden comedy between the dances. With Jack Carson, Franklin Pangborn, and Hattie McDaniel. Directed by Mark Sandrich. (Biograph Cinema; Aug. 19-20.)

Die Hard—A formula action picture, but with the extra-potency formula. It has the sweatiest hero, the most sinister bad guys (with the thickest foreign accents), the silliest plot twists, the loudest explosions, the most gratuitous bursts of machine-gun fire—all in 70 mm. and bowel-rumbling Dolby sound. Bruce Willis plays John McClane, a New York cop battling a group of European terrorists who are holding his wife (Bonnie Bedelia) and her co-workers hostage on the thirtieth floor of a gleaming L.A. skyscraper (actually the Fox Plaza in Century City). As McClane roams through the office tower, lurking and darting, a portable C.B. unit allows him to keep up a steady stream of patter: tough-guy wisecracks when he’s talking to the head terrorist (Alan Rickman, who gives the character wonderful slimy elegance); manly sincerity and soul-searching when he’s speaking with a fat, Teddy-bearish black cop (Reginald VelJohnson), who’s the only person on the outside who seems to appreciate him. The action is so grandiose and relentless that it’s funny. The director, John McTiernan, has the right style for this sort of cheerfully stupid, super-kinetic comic-book violence: there’s real relish in the way he and his team go about riddling corporate offices with gunfire, blowing slick terrorists out of their European shoes, and turning large sections of the Fox Plaza into billowing fireballs. The problem with “Die Hard” isn’t so much the physical overkill of the production as the emotional overkill of the script (by Jeb Stuart and Steven E. de Souza, from a novel by Roderick Thorp). The movie keeps nagging us to love its hero. By the end, there has been so much onscreen applause for McClane that the picture’s “humanity” seems narcissistic and fake, like Oscar-night sentimentality. Also with Alexander Godunov and Paul Gleason.—T.R. (8/8/88) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Bay Cinema, Baronet, 86th Street East Twin, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

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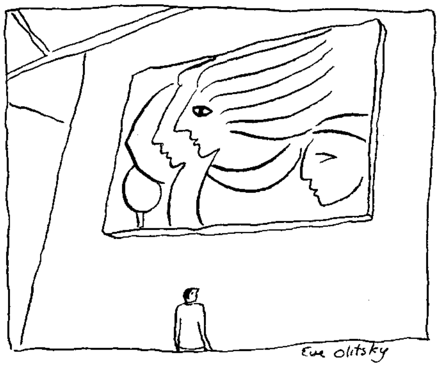
Finian’s Rainbow (1968)—Some of the whimsy in this message operetta is hard to take, but considering the moldering ponderousness of the whole project, the young Francis Ford Coppola did his best to keep things moving in a carefree, relaxing way. Coppola is helped by Petula Clark, Al Freeman, Jr., and Keenan Wynn; however, Fred Astaire is miscast, and, as the Puckish leprechaun, Tommy Steele doesn’t know how to scale down his thumping stage personality. (Biograph Cinema; Aug. 23-24.)

A Fish Called Wanda—This caper comedy promises to embody the best of two different styles of British humor: its director, the seventy-seven-year-old Charles Crichton, made “The Lavender Hill Mob,” one of the greatest of the Ealing comedies, and its writer, executive producer, and star, the towering John Cleese, was a member of the Monty Python group and the creator of the hilarious television series “Fawlty Towers.” Its main characters are a very proper London barrister (Cleese) and three jewel thieves: a crafty, sexy American woman named Wanda (Jamie Lee Curtis); another American, Otto (Kevin Kline), who’s violently Anglophobic and dumb as dirt; and Ken (the ex-Pythonite Michael Palin), a deranged stutterer who’s perfectly happy to bump off old ladies but becomes inconsolable at the death of a small dog or a tropical fish. The movie has a fair number of laughs, but Crichton’s direction is too drab and poky for the material. Every time “Wanda” threatens to take off into the realm of insane, head-splitting farce, as “Fawlty Towers” so often did, something seems to drag it down—some impulse toward stability and restraint, at odds with the script’s spirit of manic invention.—T.R. (7/25/88) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount.)

A Handful of Dust—The filmmakers who have brought Evelyn Waugh’s sharp, satiric 1934 novel to the screen treat it as if it were one of the writer’s ponderous later works—as if it were “Brideshead Revisited.” In fact, the producer, Derek Granger, and the director, Charles Sturridge, were also responsible for the plodding TV miniseries of “Brideshead” several years ago. Waugh’s novel traces the decline of Tony Last, a naïve English landowner, husband, and father who is betrayed by everything and everyone he believes in—especially by his charming, shallow wife, Brenda. Although virtually all the dialogue is lifted directly from the novel, the polished cruelty rarely sounds witty. The filmmakers give the appearance of being perfectly faithful to the novel, but they’re constantly betraying it. In the last half hour, though, we’re treated to a brilliant performance by Alec Guinness, as the alarming Mr. Todd. Playing Tony’s final betrayer, he hits the tiny notes of menace and ruthless self-interest in the lulling tones of polite English discourse: his sly, precise effects are an actor’s equivalent of Waugh’s sneakily devastating prose. With James Wilby (as Tony), Kristin Scott Thomas (as Brenda), Judi Dench, Rupert Graves, and Anjelica Huston. Screenplay by Granger, Sturridge, and Tim Sullivan.—T.R. (7/11/88) (Paris; through Aug. 23.)



Henry V (1944)—Shakespeare’s “Henry V” is the story of the playboy Plantagenet who grew up to become a great leader and, at twenty-seven, defeated the Armies of France at Agincourt. There, at the last major stand of medieval chivalry, the English archers, outnumbered five to one, cut down the fatally encumbered knights of France. Laurence Olivier once said that it was the sort of juvenile role that you can’t play when you’re a juvenile: “When you are young, you are too bashful to play a hero; you debunk it. It isn’t until you’re older that you can understand the pictorial beauty of heroism.” He came to it at the right time. His production—it was his first time out as a film director—is a triumph of color, music, spectacle, and soaring heroic poetry, and, as actor, he brings lungs, exultation, and a bashful wit to the role. The film has true charm. The music is by William Walton; the cinematography is by Robert Krasker and Jack Hildyard. (2 hours and 14 minutes.) (Cinema Village; Aug. 21.)

Married to the Mob—With Michelle Pfeiffer, Matthew Modine, and Dean Stockwell; directed by Jonathan Demme. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy; starting Aug. 19.)

Midnight Run—At first, Martin Brest’s new film is content to be a pleasantly flaky buddy movie and to lean on the talents of its two stars, Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin. De Niro’s Jack Walsh, an ex-cop who works for a weaselly L.A. bail bondsman (Joe Pantoliano), goes to New York to retrieve a white-collar crook named Jonathan Mardukas (Grodin), an accountant who upon learning that the corporation he worked for was an organized-crime front embezzled fifteen million dollars and gave almost all of it to charity. They travel across the country in a succession of vehicles, dodging federal agents, hit men, and a profoundly stupid rival bounty hunter (John Ashton). This all seems no more than a serviceable frame for a series of loose, impeccably timed odd-couple routines by the classically mismatched De Niro and Grodin. De Niro gets marvellous effects by seeming to be constantly suppressing anger and powerful physical energy. Grodin, a minimalist and a miniaturist, does all his acting with sneaky looks and minute variations in the tone of his flat, dull voice, and he creates a memorable comic character—a placid solid-citizen type who’s much wilier and crazier than he appears to be. The two actors look as if they were genuinely enjoying each other. But as they get close to L.A. Brest starts pumping up his sweetly funny road movie with large-scale action scenes—it’s as if he were afraid that a pair of superlative actors doing low-key character comedy wouldn’t be enough entertainment for us. Over its more than two hours of running time, “Midnight Run” just keeps swelling until it explodes, like a balloon inflated to the bursting point. Also with Yaphet Kotto, Dennis Farina, Richard Foronjy, and Robert Miranda. Screenplay by George Gallo.—T.R. (8/8/88) (Manhattan Twin, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and National Twin.)

No Time for Comedy (1940)—S. N. Behrman’s romantic comedy about life in the theatre, adapted by Julius J. and Philip G. Epstein

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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

and lamely directed by William Keighley. A boyish Minnesota hick (James Stewart) writes a sophisticated drawing-room comedy about titled lords and ladies; it becomes a hit and he marries his star (Rosalind Russell) and writes a succession of hits. But he meets a rich, blond muse (Genevieve Tobin) who flutters her eyelids while telling him that he has deeper possibilities—that he's a "latent artist"—and his head gets puffed up. At this point the picture stalls and becomes more forced. The supporting players are very assured in the way they hit their laugh lines, but Rosalind Russell's line readings are too rhythmic and mannered, and her no-nonsense, skeptical modern-woman role is tiresomely true-blue, and although James Stewart dominates the film with ease, there's not much excitement in what he does. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 24.)

Purple Rain (1984)—In this fictional bio, Prince, the pansexual rock star, appears as the Kid, a vulnerable loner and struggling musician. Prince's songs are a cry for the free expression of sexual energy, and his suffering is a supercharged version of what made James Dean the idol of young moviegoers—this Kid is "hurting." And this picture knows no restraint. It was directed by Albert Magnoli, but Prince is in charge, and he knows how he wants to appear—like Dionysus crossed with a convent girl on her first bender. It's pretty terrible (there are no real scenes—just flashy, fractured rock-video moments), but those willing to accept Prince as a sexual messiah aren't likely to mind. With Patty Apollonia Kotero, Morris Day, Jerome Benton, and Clarence Williams III. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 19-20.)

Tales of Manhattan (1942)—This five-episode film was planned by its producers, Boris Morros and S. P. Eagle (Sam Spiegel), as a flamboyant, star-filled, gimmicky package. Ten top screenwriters, including Ben Hecht, Donald Ogden Stewart, and Ferenc Molnár, concocted the script (which resembles a series of O. Henry rejects), and the performers who were hired include Charles Boyer, Henry Fonda, Paul Robeson, Rita Hayworth, Edward G. Robinson, Ginger Rogers, Charles Laughton, Ethel Waters, Roland Young, Thomas Mitchell, James Gleason, Cesar Romero, Gail Patrick, Elsa Lanchester, Victor Francen, Eddie Anderson, Eugene Pallette, George Sanders, Harry Davenport, Christian Rub, and the Hall Johnson Choir. The story is about the jacket of a full-dress suit; as this tailcoat, cursed by its cutter, passes from one owner to the next, it changes the luck of those who handle it. One director, Julien Duvivier, wrestled with the hyperactive, overextended vignettes, bringing the film a gaudy unity, but not a single episode is convincing on any level. (Biograph Cinema; Aug. 16. . . . ¶ Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 21.)

Tucker: The Man and His Dream—With Jeff Bridges, directed by Francis Ford Coppola. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

We Still Kill the Old Way (1966)—Based on Leonardo Sciascia's novel "A Man's Blessing," this tense, unusual thriller directed by Elio Petri has a nightmare realism that suggests Kafka. The professor-hero (Gian Maria Volonte)—a man who has always been an outsider—finds himself involved in a crime in his own Mafia-ridden Sicilian home town, and this familiar region becomes as terrifying and incomprehensible as the desert in a Paul Bowles story. His life begins to resemble paranoid fantasy—which, the movie suggests, is what life is for people who live in a corrupt society. It's easy to present fantasy on the screen, but to show a man's life in completely realistic terms, as this film does, and make us experience it as fantasy is difficult. Petri keeps us tense and uneasy, wary, expecting the worst at each moment. The island looks hot and barbaric, ominous and teeming with life. Volonte is a powerful actor who draws you inside his character, and the film is marvellously well sustained. Gabriele Ferzetti (the weak hero of "L'Avventura") is the politician who knows how to get along, and Irene Papas is scarily effective as a survivor—at the end, in her white wedding dress, her black eyes shining, she seems as strong as corruption. Also with Leopoldo Trieste. In Italian. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 21.)

White Mischief—At first, Michael Radford's film about upper-class English settlers in Kenya in the nineteen-forties seems bracingly sardonic: there isn't a hint of the sneaky romanticism and nostalgia for Empire that colonial dramas so frequently succumb to. As one aristocratic viper after another is introduced, and each member of the large and familiar cast (Greta Scacchi, Charles Dance, Joss Ackland, Sarah Miles, John Hurt, Trevor Howard, Geraldine Chaplin) makes his distinctively peculiar entrance, the movie promises to be wicked fun. Amazingly, though, as the action gets nastier the picture gets duller. The screenplay, by Radford and Jonathan Gems, is based on the real-life murder of Josslyn Hay, Earl of Errol (Dance), a colonial Casanova who conducted a flagrant affair with young Lady Diana Broughton (Scacchi), to which their jaded social set reacted with a mixture of amusement and jealousy. As the movie concentrates more and more on the unsavory triangle of Errol, Diana, and her creepy middle-aged husband (Ackland), we begin to get the uneasy feeling that the director has lost track of his own intentions. For all the melodramatic complications, the characters remain static, as if they'd been frozen in place after their initial scenes.—T.R. (Cinema 3.)

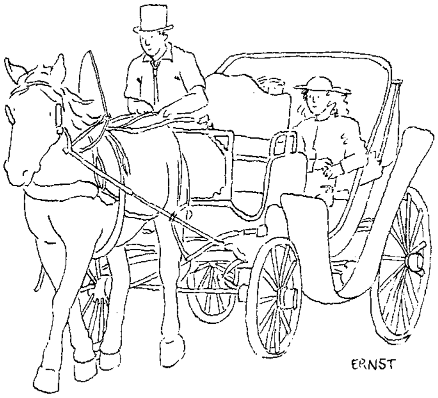
Who Framed Roger Rabbit—This manic comedy, in which animated cartoon characters interact with live actors, is an amazing feat of entertainment engineering—like a Disneyland ride or a World's Fair movie. The setting is Los Angeles in 1947, and the screenplay, by Jeffrey Price and Peter Seaman, takes off from the fairly witty conceit that the cartoon characters, called Toons here, are ordinary contract players in the already skewed universe of the Hollywood studio system. These strange creatures become involved in a conventional forties mystery plot, featuring a seedy, hard-drinking private eye (Bob Hoskins). The director, Robert Zemeckis, and his small army of animators and special-effects artists mean to pay homage to the Hollywood animation of the thirties and forties, but the movie doesn't have the right spirit. Technology and plot mechanics labor mightily to evoke an aura of freedom and uninhibited joy—yet there's hardly a spontaneous moment in the film. Also with Christopher Lloyd, Joanna Cassidy, and Stubby Kaye. The funniest Toon, Roger's sireny wife, Jessica, speaks with Kathleen Turner's (uncredited) voice and sings with Amy Irving's. The director of animation was Richard Williams. Adapted, very loosely, from the novel "Who Censored Roger Rabbit?," by Gary K. Wolf.—T.R. (7/11/88) (Gramercy, Coronet, Columbia Cinema, and Embassy 1.)

Willow—The evil sorceress Queen Bavmorda (Jean Marsh) is killing all the newborn babies in the Daikini domain, because of a prophecy that an infant born with a special mark will bring about her downfall. Placed on a raft of rushes, the savior baby girl drifts downriver into the land of a peaceful, elflike people, the Nelwyns. A young Nelwyn farmer, Willow (Warwick Davis), tries to protect her, and eventually, with the help of an outlaw Daikini swordsman (Val Kilmer) and a rebel Daikini (Gavan O'Herlihy), Willow storms the evil queen's black castle. This tale involves trolls, vicious black boars, nine-inch-tall men called Brownies, platinum-wigged Tinker Bells, a two-headed dragon, and some four hundred special-effects shots. Before it's over, you feel as if you'd fallen into a pile of mixed metaphors. Produced by George Lucas, who also wrote the story, the movie seems to be one stale idea after another. The director, Ron Howard, shows his gentle talent only in his handling of the three-foot-four-inch Willow, whose sweet-faced humility could make parts of the movie appealing to kids. With Billy Barty—triumphant as usual—as the High Aldwin of the Nelwyns. (5/30/88) (Eastside Cinema; starting Aug. 19, tentative.)

Wings of Desire ("Der Himmel über Berlin")—The director, Wim Wenders, who wrote the script with the collaboration of Peter Handke, has a theme: in an approximation of Rilke's words, "Joy has gone astray." We're told that "when the child was a child" stories held together. Now all we have is fragmentation, entropy. Two angels—Damiel (Bruno Ganz) and Cassiel (Otto Sander)—hover over the bleak, divided city and move among the forlorn Berliners, listening to what's in their minds: listening to the questions about existence that these people ask themselves. Our overhearing what the angels hear—the thoughts chanted on the track, all in even, quiet tones, as grayed out as the sunless skies—works on us like a tranquillizer. Eventually, Damiel falls in love with a beautiful French aerialist (Solveig Dommartin), and gives up his wings. With Peter Falk, who brings some funky warmth to the role of an American movie star, and Curt Bois as a sad-faced old man called Homer. The cinematography (tinted black-and-white, and color) is by Henri Alekan. This Franco-German production is in English, French, and German. (5/30/88) (Cinema Studio.)

A World Apart—Set in 1963, it's about a thirteen-year-old girl (Jodhi May) who lives a well-ordered, ruling-class life in a fine home in suburban Johannesburg until her father (Jeroen Krabbé), who's a Communist, flees the country in the middle of the night to escape arrest, and her mother (Barbara Hershey), the editor of a small anti-apartheid newspaper, is "detained" for ninety days, and then another ninety days. Based on a semi-autobiographical script by Shawn Slovo, the daughter of the journalist Ruth First and Joe Slovo, the leader of the banned South African Communist Party, the movie deals with the girl's feeling confused and resentful—the fight against apartheid is also her competitor. In prison or out, her mother is not all there for her. The theme of the movie is the conflict between fighting injustice and what we owe to our families—or, more poignantly, a young girl's pain at the loss of her mother and father, though she knows the reason for it. Shot in Zimbabwe, this remarkable first feature directed by the noted cinematographer Chris Menges has a visual snap to it. It's luminous yet very informal. And though, toward the end, it falls into chanting slogans, it has a radiant intelligence. The cast includes Linda Mvusi, who shared the best-actress award at Cannes with May and Hershey, and Tim Roth, Yvonne Bryceland, Albee Lesotho, David Suchet, and Nadine Chalmers. (6/13/88) (Quad Cinema, and Festival.)

You'll Never Get Rich (1941)—Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth, and it doesn't work out too well, partly because she's too physical—too radiantly, youthfully overpowering for him—and partly because the mixture of the backstage-musical plot and the Second World War enlistment-in-the-Army theme weighs down the songs and dances. Cole Porter did the lyrics and music (which don't stick in the mind); Sidney Lanfield directed. The cast includes Robert Benchley, John Hubbard, and Osa Massen. (Biograph Cinema; Aug. 19-20.)



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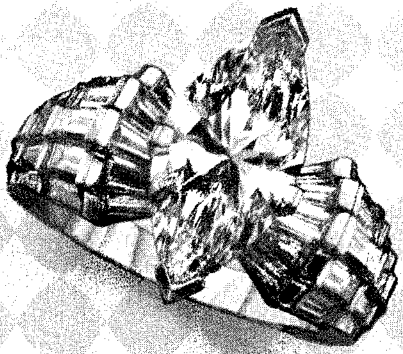


DIAMONDS AS EXCEPTIONAL
AS THE WOMAN WHO WEARS THEM.

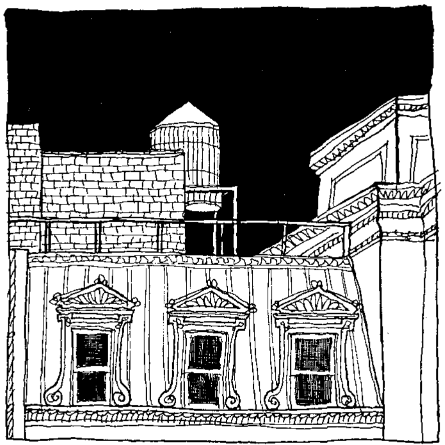
THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

WHILE the United Nations and international mediators are earning praise for their roles in what some commentators have heralded as an "outbreak of peace"—Iraq-Iran, Angola, Afghanistan, Cambodia—a grim civil war has broken out almost unnoticed in Somalia, a small country on the Horn of Africa that wraps like a boomerang around the eastern border of Ethiopia. In the northern part of Somalia, a group that calls itself the Somali National Movement is fighting against the government of Muhammad Siad Barre, who seized power in a coup in 1969. The S.N.M. is principally a movement of the Isaq, a northern clan that feels that its people have been excluded and discriminated against by Barre, a member of the southern Marehan clan, who is about eighty years old—no one is sure of his exact age—and is in ill health. In late May, the S.N.M. launched a series of attacks on several cities and their military installations, catching nearly everyone in the region by surprise. By some accounts, more than ten thousand people have been killed in two and a half months of fighting, and between four and five thousand people are said to be fleeing northern Somalia every day. In Addis Ababa, the other day, someone employed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said, "I don't think people who have worked in the organization for thirty years have seen anything like it." By now, more than two hundred and seventy-five thousand Somalis have fled to Ethiopia, and the exodus continues. What is more alarming is the possibility that there may be an additional fifty thousand trapped in Misrak Gashamo, a border region of Ethiopia that, international relief workers say, is accessible only by foot and by helicopter. That anyone would seek refuge in Ethiopia—an impoverished country beset by famine, floods, locusts, and a civil war of its own—says much about the desperation in Somalia.

"Both sides have committed human-rights abuses—serious ones," a diplomat who has tried to keep abreast of the situation says. According to this diplomat, when the Isaq attacked, they settled blood feuds, killing the families of soldiers and policemen. The government has responded with the heavy weaponry of war. Planes have bombed Hargeysa, the largest city in northern Somalia, and strafed fleeing residents. There have been reports of mass executions by government troops. A French hospital worker who witnessed the fighting before he was evacuated, in June, said that government firing squads had executed almost two dozen people behind his house. A West German doctor reports that in June so many bodies were lying in the street that they impeded traffic. Before the fighting began, Hargeysa's population was eighty thousand. "Today, it's a ghost town," the diplomat says.



Some of the refugees have set up camps in the Ogaden, a treeless, arid region of Ethiopia which is hot by day and cold at night. "The conditions are very, very harsh," according to one relief worker. "It is bleak." The biggest worry is water. There is no subsurface water in the region, and the nearest wells are in the town of Jijiga, nearly a hundred miles to the west. Moreover, those wells are old, and incapable of supplying water for what have become small cities in the desert, with a combined population seven times Jijiga's. At the moment, refugees are surviving on half a litre of water a day. Oxfam U.K., the international relief-and-development organization, is drilling new wells in Jijiga, but after they are completed trucks will have to be bought or donated to haul the water to the refugee camps, travelling over roadless sand.

The Ethiopian government has coöperated with the relief effort up to a point. It has allowed the U.N.H.C.R. and organizations such as Oxfam and Save the Children U.K. to begin working, but it has not granted them full access to the refugees. And no relief workers have been allowed into Misrak Gashamo. The Ethiopians have also refused to allow any journalists into the refugee camps in the Ogaden, despite appeals from their own Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. The Ethiopian military is reluctant to allow anyone into the Ogaden, partly because there are Cuban troops there, and the government in general is concerned about stories getting out that might offend the Somali government. The two countries signed a peace treaty in April, ending a conflict that began when Somalia invaded the Ogaden in 1977.

Perhaps the Soviet Union and the United States, which have extended themselves in behalf of peace efforts in Angola and Afghanistan, should now seek to exert some influence in this crisis. The Ethiopian government, which is Marxist, is dependent for its survival on the Soviet Union, from which it has received at least five billion dollars in military assistance over the last decade. At the moment, it is in urgent need of still more assistance from the Soviets, to stave off defeat by increasingly strong guerrilla forces in the country's northern provinces. Moscow could no doubt persuade the Ethiopians to open the refugee camps immediately to relief workers and the outside world.

Washington's leverage is with Somalia, where the United States has military rights to the northern port of Berbera. In the past two years, Somalia has received over a hundred million dollars in American military and economic aid. The Reagan Administration has been silent on Somalia, but two weeks after the fighting broke out, the White House approved the dispatch of back-order military equipment consisting of twelve hundred M-16 rifles, two million rounds of ammunition, and thirteen hundred grenades. Although members of Congress continue to demand a more active role in the formulation of American foreign policy, they have chosen to avoid active involvement in this emergency. There has been no proposal for legislation cutting off military aid to Somalia—not even a proposal to make further aid contingent on an end to the killing of civilians.

The U.N.H.C.R. has made an appeal to the international community for funds to help with the emergency; it estimates that it will need at least thirty-two million dollars in cash and in-kind contributions. The response to the appeal has been "very disappointing," a senior U.N.H.C.R. official in Geneva said not long ago. Only the United Kingdom and Australia have responded directly, pledging a total of about a million dollars. Norway and Italy have offered food and materials. Neither the United States nor Japan has come up with any new funds, both saying that money previously promised for African refugees can be shifted to the Somali operation. From the Soviet Union, nothing.

As for the Somali government, in June it effectively expelled some hundred and sixty foreigners by ordering them either to remain in the war zone or to leave the country, and it has since refused to give the International Committee of the Red Cross access to the north, even though this organization exists to provide humanitarian relief in war areas. Journalists have been denied visas to enter the country. Much of the world is either ignorant of or indifferent to what is going on in Somalia, and that, apparently, is the way the Somali government wants it.

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Riot

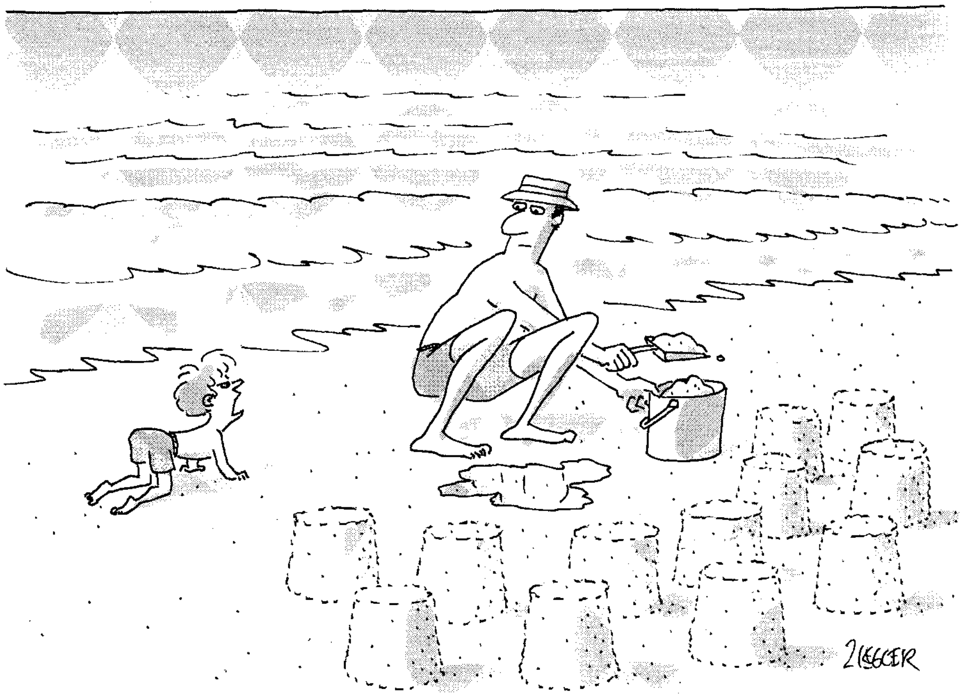
A FRIEND writes:

Well after midnight on Sunday, August 7th, as I was walking up Second Avenue toward my apartment, on Twelfth Street, eight police vehicles came screeching around the corner of St. Mark's Place, bearing down on Tompkins Square Park. I decided to follow them. The park had been much on my mind lately. A decade ago, when I moved into the neighborhood, the park had been the province of junkies and muggers, and I'd seldom ventured into it after dark. More recently, it had regained its vitality as a public gathering place. On weekend nights, especially, it emanated music and high jinks as the traffic between the dozens of bars and restaurants nearby just naturally came through the park. At the same time, it had become an encampment of the homeless. On bitter nights last January, people could be seen huddled around trash-can bonfires or sleeping packed together under a tarp. Later in the winter, though, policemen had been coming in to douse the flames and otherwise harass the residents of this latter-day Hooverville.

When summer arrived, the ongoing party and the settlement of the dispossessed had noticeably fused. The result was a mild commotion, a bit boisterous but no threat to anyone. Nevertheless, it had something of the quality of a ticking bomb. The park's history had been marked by clashes between the police and area residents ever since gun emplacements were moved in for fear of local anarchist flareups after the Haymarket-riot anarchists in Chicago were executed, in 1887. (No flareups occurred.) Especially notable had been violent turf wars in the late nineteen-sixties and early seventies, a three-way tangle of police, hippies, and Hispanic youths. For fifteen years thereafter, the park and the neighborhood in general had been merely poor, and therefore ignored by officials, but with gentrification tension had returned. There had been talk, for example, that the city was unhappy with the park's design—disturbed by the darkness under the dense, ancient trees and by the twisting, European-style paths—and was considering revising the landscape to make it more open and policeable. It did not come as much of a surprise to learn that the police intended to begin closing the park at night, or that such an effort on the last weekend in July was met with vocal, if confused, resistance. On that occasion, some taunting went on and a scattering of arrests took place, but around two in the morning the cops departed—and jubilant locals moved back into the park, convinced that they had won.

On August 7th, though, matters looked very different. Even before I reached First Avenue, there were people running at full tilt toward me, away from the park. Groups were massed on the four corners of First and St. Mark's, shouting "The park belongs to the people!" and similar slogans. Halfway to Avenue A, a cordon of cops in riot gear stood blocking further access to the park, and weren't even letting people through to their homes. Nor would they answer questions. A police helicopter hovered so low overhead that the roar of its motor seemed to be coming from behind the houses on both sides of the street.

Above Avenue A, the helicopter aimed its spotlight at the tops of buildings. Was it looking for snipers? The avenue was full of people. Some were protesting, but many had emerged from bars or from their apartments, even from bed, to find out what was happening; one man was wearing a bathrobe and slippers. A group crowded around a man who said he had heard the commander of the Ninth Precinct say he was calling for reinforcements because of "Communist agitators" among the protesters. This drew a laugh. Police



"Dad, would you please go back to doing the parenting, so that I can do some of the childing for a couple of minutes?"

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were everywhere (by the end of the night their numbers were estimated at four hundred and fifty): regular cops with their caps turned around, plainclothesmen with walkie-talkies, riot troops bearing Plexiglas shields, vehicles with designations ranging from "Hazardous Materials Squad" to "DWI Task Force," and, just below the park's main entrance, opposite St. Mark's Place, an Emergency Service truck the size of a bus, with lamps like klieg lights aimed up and down the avenue. At one point, a detachment of mounted cops went tearing along St. Mark's at full gallop.

On First Avenue, all was chaos. Trash cans lay on their sides in the street, small groups of civilians were being chased this way and that both by mounted cops and by foot cops wielding nightsticks. The police appeared to be acting in purely random fashion, suddenly deciding to empty a particular corner or stretch of sidewalk, or, hearing an insult launched at them from the crowd, undertaking a flanking maneuver, sticks braced, as they intoned a rhythmic chant of their own: "Kill, kill, kill." More vehicles—patrol cars and paddy wagons—kept rushing down the avenue the wrong way. Then they would park and the cops would mill around.

By two o'clock, back on Avenue A, the block between Sixth and Seventh Streets, just below the park, was an empty zone, with police lines at either end. A few cops were striding up and down demanding that shopkeepers and the owners of bars and restaurants shut their gates, though from the looks of the crowd, looting was about the last thing on anybody's mind. One long-haired peacock in an incongruous shiny black duster paced around in confusion, preening as if by reflex. A shirtless man stalked the front of the crowd with the air of a prophet, lifting his cane in the air and starting chants. Most people simply looked dazed. I watched the activity for ten or fifteen minutes longer, virtually the only civilian at large on the block, and then a small cop came up and shouted, half pleading, "What are you doing? Go home!" as if I were an errant toddler and he a nervous young father.

At Sixth Street, a heavy concentration of police stood blocking off the avenue to a crowd of several hundred locals. There were cops who were trying to reason things out with their opponents (their reasoning was mostly of the "if you go home everything will be all right" variety), but they were a distinct minority in the blue ranks, which tended toward the abrupt and sarcastic.

A knot of people on one corner clustered around two priests, who were apparently among the complainants responsible for the cops' presence; that is, they had asked the precinct to try to reduce the volume of noise from the park. Now they seemed alternately embarrassed and defensive in the face of the semi-military occupation. A couple of reasonable-sounding passersby had witnessed the beginning of the fray, around 1 A.M.; they said the cops had emptied the park, a group of youths had turned around and rushed the fence, and sticks had been wielded and bottles thrown. Matters had quickly escalated from there. The priests were maintaining that a large police presence was necessary to protect their parishioners from the crack trade, and didn't register the fact, even when it was pointed out to them, that such trade ordinarily takes place not in the park but in derelict buildings on side streets.

Events of the next few hours grew increasingly repetitive: cops and crowd would get locked in a face-off, which would then be broken when somebody (always somebody invisible in the rear) lobbed a bottle, whereupon the cops would charge and club heads. A young woman who had done nothing more than stand in the wrong place was clubbed so badly that her shirt was soaked with blood. After she was removed, in an ambulance, others raised her shirt like a flag. Onlookers wept, screamed in frustration, exhorted their fellows to get their own sticks and do battle. The crowd had no leaders and no logic. Neither did the cops, apparently. They spent a great deal of time dispatching units to investigate rooftops from which nothing was being thrown. Periodically, cops would go around dumping garbage cans and breaking empty bottles with their feet and their clubs, invariably drawing applause from the crowd. During these sweeps, they seemed to attack bicycles with special vehemence, deliberately damaging them with their truncheons; disheartened figures dragging home broken cycles became a common sight. A negotiating session between locals and cops, mediated by a third priest, ended up in a bout of circular arguments. Every now and again, a fire truck would pull up, pause for a while, and then depart; this mystified everybody until the following day, when a news report stated that police had charged that the crowd was starting fires along the avenue. That night, no fires were seen, at least by me.

The siege ended at dawn, when police allowed people back into the park. (It seemed strange that anyone still remembered the park.) The next day, the radio reported the box score: nine arrests, three dozen or so treated at hospitals for injuries, twenty-seven police-brutality complaints. Mayor Koch then lifted the curfew. The proposed relandscaping of the park will no doubt be initiated very soon.

Outside the Fold

ETHYL EICHELBERGER is a big man who plays big women—Lucrezia Borgia, say, or Elizabeth I, or Nefertiti, who in Eichelberger's version is a barefoot Eighteenth Dynasty grouch. For fifteen years, Mr. Eichelberger has been barnstorming the performance-art circuit of downtown theatres and dives with monologues from a thirty-character repertoire of male and, mostly, female roles. He has also portrayed the Abbess in last year's Vivian Beaumont "Comedy of Errors" (wearing a blue strapless gown) and Phaedra (in Robert Lowell's version of Racine) at Dance Theatre Workshop, where he set a kind of record for dramatic nerve storms. A while back, Mr. Eichelberger was commissioned to create a solo for this summer's Serious Fun! festival at Lincoln Center. The playlet he came up with starred him as both Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln. "Plaintive, wrecked grandeur" was the *Times* reviewer's fine summing up of Eichelberger's dramatic style. On the day before the performance, we dropped in on Mr. Eichelberger, and found him pinning last-minute rosettes to Mary Todd Lincoln's gown.

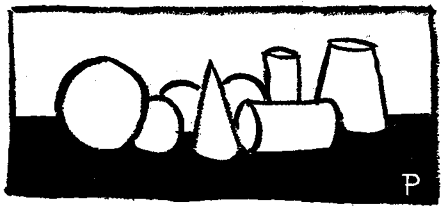
"My first female role was in fifth grade," Mr. Eichelberger told us. "I played the witch in 'Hansel and Gretel.' My mother made a crêpe-paper dress and a pointed hat and a wig of pink yarn. I never got over it. Actually, it may have started before that. I believe that in ancient Greece I was probably a man playing women's parts." Ethyl Eichelberger is tall, with a gentle manner and an angular face. He has pale eyes and eyelashes, shaved eyebrows, and hair cut close to his skull. In some lights he has the slightly poached look of a Memling Madonna. He lives in a Bowery storefront, which is dim, wedge-shaped, and crammed. At the wide end, two chairs face a television set of a size we've rarely seen outside a bar. The rest of the space is given over largely to Eichelberger's collection of musical instruments—five accordions, a balalaika, a Mexican harp, a set of bagpipes, two organs (a Farfisa and a pump harmonium), a spinet, and a baby grand—and to his costume racks, his unicycles, and his wigs.

"I was born in Pekin, Illinois, of one hundred per cent Amish Mennonite stock," said Mr. Eichelberger, sitting cross-legged in a tank top and pink boxing trunks. "My parents raised me outside the fold. They left that community to live in the world. Since I was from Illinois, Lincoln was an important figure to me. As kids, we were taken on class trips to Lincoln's Tomb, in Springfield. There's a shrine with a nice, tall spire, and an ugly bronze statue out front. Everyone who visits rubs Lincoln's nose, so it's shiny and the rest of the statue is dull. In high school, I was statewide champion in serious reading and all-state actor. I attended Knox College and then the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. After graduation, in 1967, I was running a coffeehouse theatre on the Upper East Side and wondering what to do next. A friend took me to meet the actress Blanche Yurka. She received us sitting on a piano bench in front of a semi-nude painting of her younger self, and she said, in a grande-dame voice, 'You must go to the hinterlands and learn your craft.' And—well, I sort of did."

Eichelberger left for Providence, joined the Trinity Square Repertory Company, traded his brass bed for an antique squeezebox, and moved into an Airstream trailer, which he parked in the woods. "I still play the squeezebox in my shows," he said.

A summer storm had been threatening when we arrived. Now thunder clapped, and Mr. Eichelberger's old Scottie, Macduff, shambled from a dark corner and hid under a chair. We asked Mr. Eichelberger how he had come to specialize in women's roles.

"After seven years in Providence, I decided I was as technically immersed in legitimate theatre as I wanted to be," he said. "I came to New York and drifted into an Off Off Broadway rehearsal, where I saw Charles Ludlam pick up a piece of green satin, drape it around himself, and *become* Norma Desmond. I knew a genius when I saw one, so I decided to hang around."



Mr. Eichelberger enrolled in Ludlam's fledgling Ridiculous Theatrical Company, as a dresser. Later, he graduated to the stage, playing demented second (and third) bananas in Ludlam's outsize, underfunded farces. In "Der Ring Gott Farblonjet" he took the role of Fricka, the Queen of the Gods. He was the Chief Eunuch in "Salammbô," and played Mother Nurdiger in "The Artificial Jungle" and Nanine, the maid, in "Camille." Along the way, he had started to write and perform his own character pieces. He had also taken the first name Ethyl and got a tattoo. The tattoo, which covers Mr. Eichelberger's back, is a portrait of himself apotheosized. In all, he spent fifty hours being inked. "It's me as an angel," he told us. "It was scary but fortifying to make a change that permanent. Also, I'd been playing a lot of female roles, but I'm not a female impersonator, and I figured this would get the message across. No serious drag queen would have a tattoo across his back."

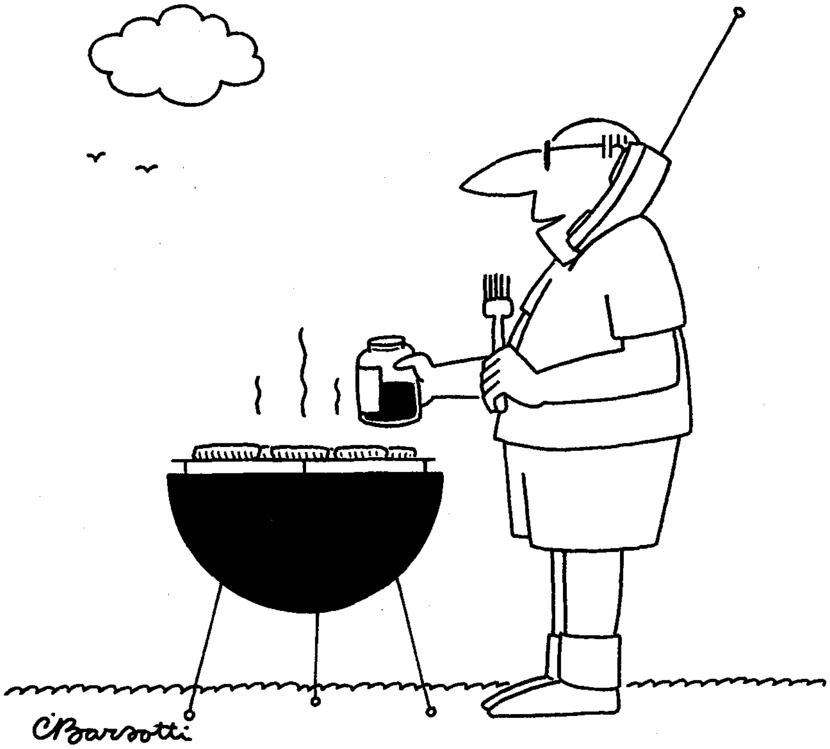
Until lately, Mr. Eichelberger has supported himself between shows (he recently toured Australia) as a theatrical hairdresser. His diploma from the Ultissima Beauty Institute hangs on one wall of his quarters. "Oh, I've driven a cab, and I was a salesman in a candle shop on Christopher Street, but I needed something more in my line. So I decided to go to beauty school, which turned out to be like jail—you serve a thousand-hour sentence. I stuck it out, though, because you can always make a living in hair."

The Rain

FROM a friend in transit we have received this letter, postmarked Luverne, Minnesota:

I took an informal survey on Interstate 90 yesterday and found that every vehicle but ours—the one carrying Reggie, my wife, and Buckwheat, our dog, and me to Montana—was air-conditioned. No longer do truckers hang triceps like small smoked hams out the window in the heat, fingers resting on the sideview-mirror struts. Kids still squabble on long drives, but now they do so in the cool, where ice-cream cones don't sticky up the seat so fast. I was the only person I saw getting a left-hand tan—except Reggie when she chose to drive. I had no idea that we were so conservative. Or that we could be so hot.

All across Minnesota, we watched a cloud bank in the west, an apparent pause in the heat wave that has been wilting the middle part of the country this summer. About four o'clock, we drove under its shade and into my Uncle Louie and Aunt Janelle's farm, near Luverne, in the far-southwestern corner of Minnesota. We found a note taped to their side screen door: "Janelle and Louie will be here later. The door is unlocked. Come right on in and make yourself at home." It was signed "Carol—a neighbor." Having nursed the crops and cattle into as fine a state as drought allows, Janelle and Louie had gone to California for a week to visit their son and his family. The plane carrying them home was due any minute in Sioux Falls.



"No problem, B. J. I can talk and baste at the same time."

• •

So we sat on the narrow porch and admired the hollyhocks under the elm, and watched the steers sulk down in the feedlot, and hoped that rain would break out from the blackening sky. It came at six-twenty. A stiff south wind bent the youngest trees in the grove and rustled the older ones. Lightning played on the far side of the Rock River. The rain hummed in different pitches on the steel roof of the machine shop and on the corrugated roof of Louie's old calf barn. It fell harder and harder, until it sounded like a flock of sheep trotting down a blacktop road. The wind shifted, and water angled toward the porch. We retreated and watched the storm from inside. Cloud cover turned the yard light on; lightning turned it off again. An electric eye is easily fooled.

During a lull, we heard a knock on the side door. It was Carol ("a neighbor"), her husband, Bruce, and their young son, Scott. Carol had brought an egg bake (ham, eggs, and batter in a Pyrex dish) for breakfast. "Janelle said the two of you were coming to spend the night, but I didn't think she had anything in the refrigerator, so I just brought this along for the morning." She had thought about baking "bars" and making a pitcher of lemonade for us, she said, but, over the phone from California, Janelle had convinced her that we could fend for ourselves. Bruce leaned against the kitchen cabinet and smiled, without saying much. He is tall and has no more fat on his body than he has on his boots. There was a gleam on Carol and Bruce. It was the rain. They had had one and one-tenth inches since the last wet snow, in April. Now they were having a lot more.

By nine, Reggie and I had begun to worry about Janelle and Louie, but we figured they had found dinner somewhere, so we drove to town to find some for ourselves. The rain had been falling steadily for nearly two hours. In the dark, on the highway, we could almost feel the leaves of corn, furled by dryness like rhododendrons in the cold, beginning to spread themselves again, the kernels starting to take on water. The soybeans would get no taller now, but their pods would really fill in well. Town at first was quiet. The streets filled slowly with people driving back and forth, apparently to listen to the hiss beneath their tires and the pattering overhead. They may have all been going somewhere important, but to me it looked as if they were going to the rain.

Ten o'clock, back from the Country Kitchen, and still no Louie and Janelle. Reggie and Buckwheat went upstairs to bed. At ten-thirty, I heard a car in the drive. It was my aunt and uncle with a farming couple (more neighbors), who had given them a ride from the airport. We all stood in what was now a light rain, grinning at each other in the illumination of the addled yard light and the dome and trunk lights of the car. We sniffed rain, talked rain, and thought how good it was to have to walk around puddles. The neighbors drove away, the three of us settled in the kitchen for a drink, and Reggie, who had heard our laughter in the driveway, came down to join us. Janelle, who has a face like moonlight, sat at the kitchen counter, and Louie, a wiry, dark-haired man of sixty, poured the whiskey into the glasses, talking.

"The drought has been kind of in streaks," he said. "Four miles east, by Kanaranzi, they've had a pretty good summer. Not here."

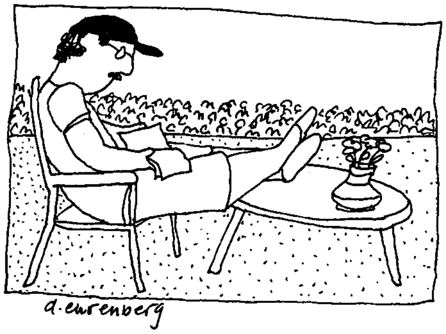
Before breakfast this morning, I walked out to look at Louie's rain gauge, a sort of graduated pilsner glass stuck in the ground by the well. It said three point two inches. The steers were over their hooves in standing water at the low end of the feedlot. I came back in and sat down to egg bake. It was delicious. The day would never get hot.

ANNEMARIE SINGING

S. L. Silenowicz when he talked about Annemarie went from mood to mood: "You got to hand it to her, she does her damnedest. She makes things nice. She's got the hand of an artist with fried chicken when she's going good. I'm here to tell you: what a man eats, that's what a man is; you take a refugee from being kosher who likes his bacon, that's me; I don't like bacon that looks like shoelaces. Grease will put you in your grave. A man needs his bacon, he brings it home. Well, there you have it in a nutshell; keep it crisp like matzo—manna, they say that's manna, matzo is—man needs his bacon to be like manna, heavy on the mayo, heavy on Heaven—you know how the angels get fried chicken? They get some booger to cook 'em up some in Hell and they send it right up. Take it easy, that's the way, that's the only way to be nice. We all know what it's like on this here old planet earth, right? Annemarie is the world's craziest woman, there's no doubt about that. She's mighty ugly, and there's no doubt about *that.* I don't like ugly faces in the morning before I have my bacon, but that fat woman, she sure has the tender touch with (uh)n egg—yessirree. She may be German, she may be French"—she was from Alsace-Lorraine and her last name was Roittenburger, and she spoke more German than French—"but if you ask me she's more American than the Pope: just taste her apple pie.

"And she likes our little Wiley, our little Will-he-won't-he-keep-it-down. It ain't easy with a sick kid, it's hard, it's hard to be with him, it's creepy sometimes, he never speaks—his eyes speak—he don't make much noise and that's nice but it can drive you right up the wall—poor little crip—and the old gray mare can't stand it, she ain't what we used to be—" Lila, his wife, my new mother, was in her thirties. "It tears you apart, a little tiny half-alive crip of a kid like that—I don't think I'm all so wonderful but I think I got a hand with kids; well, I'll tell you something, Annemarie is *good* to him, *good,* she is an A No. One helpmeet in this little ol' projeck. It's nobody's beeswax—you know that old one—how it gets a man to have sweetness in the house: it's like honey, it's nectar and ambrosia, it does my heart good to be around that woman when she's going great guns hell-for-leather all-out sweetness-and-light—you wouldn't believe how she keeps us on our toes, she's a Nursing Marvel, a Nightingale. Why, you ought to see us go through hoops—hoo-hoo-hoo: she holds our noses to the grindstone, believe you me. Of course, she's a damned sullen bitch if you cross her, you wouldn't give her the time of day before you got to know her, but she wants to bring me and Wiley together, she wants to show me the way, she wants to make a home for the little crip, her heart's right there, her heart's in the highlands, that fatty, she's one of the little people if you don't mind them being not so little, she's got a heart as big as her ass, but she's something special, she works hard, she don't hate you because you write the paycheck, she's a European, she makes things damned pleasant for me, cooks what I want, cooks it the way I like it, she listens, she listens to me, and that's nice, that's damned special. You know?

"I wouldn't want to meet her in a dark alley on one of her anti-Semite days; I wouldn't want to wake up in bed with her either—she don't like Jews none and she don't like men, but I'm no Goody Two-shoes, you can't have everything, and I know I need a home, and I ain't a-gonna get it from Madam Busy Lila. A lot of people think I'm dumb 'cause I don't like school and I don't like books, and I don't like big words, but I know one or two little things, I know what counts, I know how to live, I know how to be happy. I'm a gentleman and a scholar, I'm a peace lover, I say, no blame, no shame, (e)nough said; let's love one another and get on with it—what else can we do? Annemarie's chicken dishes are right out of the good drawer, you'd swear she'd worked for gourmets all her life—tip-top, A No. One top drawer—and some of her vegetables and her pork are right up there, too, Mount Everest all the way, fasten your oxygen masks, your heart knows it's found a home. Just the best, it melts in your mouth, her sauerkraut, anything with beans, that stuff can make up for any man's ordinary day of shit. You get pushed around, you make a couple of dumb guesses, you do business with six murderers and seven thieves and eighteen rednecks, and you sit down, and everyone has good manners, and the good food just melts in your mouth the way you like it, she understands me, I tell you, it's stupendous—



"Well, what's important? I ask you. Let's live in peace, I say, you have to live from day to day, you have to eat—you like to eat? I like to eat—O.K.? So she doesn't drink, she gets on my nerves, but my life's no good without her, she's like an ugly wife, she'll cook your heart right out of your body, she's wonderful, and I like a little peace now and then, wouldn't you?"

Ma said, "I'm not a romantic but you should see him and Annemarie going at it, each one out-good-hearting the other—and making just so much beautiful music you'd think the Second Coming was over and done with—they're like lovers. He's gaining weight—and he's losing his hair, he'll be just her speed in another six months, like poor little Wiley is now—"

"Annemarie doesn't know much," Lila said. "Annemarie is an immigrant—she comes from Alsace-Lorraine: you know where that is? Her father was no good. She and her mother lived with relatives, her mother sent her to live with an uncle who had a farm, that's how come she knows about food, she grew up on a French farm—I think her father was German but her uncle was French. The aunt died, and the uncle got a little too friendly, and Annemarie's mother didn't do anything, she was living on an allowance, well, you can imagine what it was like—some stories are so sad they can get tears from a stone, and I'm not a stone, I'm charitable. A lot of things happen on farms. It was on a farm, it wasn't a nice thing, but Annemarie has backbone; she may be ignorant but she has a lot of backbone. She left, on her own—

"The usual."

she got to be very stubborn about being A Good Woman, you know what I mean? You have to do that when you're on your own—and sometimes it's worse when you're plain: maybe the men are fewer but they're surer you have no choice. She's a little crazy but a woman's life is hard. S.L. likes her, I have to hand it to him, he has judgment once in a while. . . ."

Annemarie in a farm courtyard in Alsace, in the French light when the air has a faint white mist in it, the uncle drunken and—and what?

"Perhaps she made it all up—she's plain; you know how women are—they have to imagine a life if they don't have one. That was never my problem. Maybe that's what's wrong with me, maybe that's what went wrong, I lived my life and I'm all used up—" She was being ironic. She was very proud of her looks still.

If I'm unironic and try to be honest in my turn, I would guess that maybe Annemarie didn't know at first what was happening with her uncle or what was meant by his actions. Or maybe it was that she was repelled from the start but got suckered in by propinquity and pity, or curiosity, or simply the hope of some pleasure. When you're young, sometimes your body gives you little peace. And then maybe it didn't work out at all. I mean sexual stuff involves each person's personal power over the other, complex arrangements, and probably the uncle didn't know that. I doubt Annemarie was a single-hearted unyielding virgin to start with. If I try to imagine what happened, I see her not understanding right away, and then going too far in her imagination, in her hopes; and then things happened—the attempt at love was blasphemy; or maybe just the barest beginnings happened, and she was sickened at once. I think she became virginal; she demanded goodness toward herself—a kind of rationality; she stayed in her first plump, pale youth long after her youth was gone.

"She got a job with a family in one of those cities they have," S.L. said, "and the same thing happened—you know it's not her imagination, but I don't know what happened; *the same thing happened*—that doesn't mean much, that's her way of telling a story—women can either cook or they can tell stories, just you ask me if you want to know the truth about women."

A gray stone city and narrow streets.

"All that work," Momma said. "That woman has a history of work, you have no idea, dawn to dusk; you have to hand it to her—but she can't take orders. I found her through some people in Clayton who thought she was scary—they didn't want her."

"Well, Honey swats what Molly pins—" *Honi soit qui mal y pense*. "We landed in clover with this one: my wife's momma made the decision—she made too many of our decisions but what can you do?"

"Momma could take a back seat to a worker like that—the house was nice, it was nice all the time, that's important, you know."

Lila, my mother at that time, used to have one day a week or every ten days when her health, her nerves, collapsed: she would spend the day in a darkened room "nursing myself." On one such occasion, she said, "Why do you suppose people have things to hide? Because they're good? You think they hide anything good? You think people acting open are really open?"

Momma said to me about Annemarie, "You be careful: you think she's so wonderful. She never told me the truth, not once."

Momma had no name for the days when her velocity in the world turned into helplessness, or into a kind of screech of nerves. She said, "People tire me out, I tire me out," and, "I have nothing to say good about anyone today—" Sometimes her voice was shrill; often her hair was "wild" (her word); she couldn't bear to touch herself or be touched; she could bear no clothes except very fine cotton or silk and nothing could be tied tightly; and she would say, "I've gone mad, didn't you know—cramps are the devil's taking a hand in things." Or: "God is sending me a headache because I'm not a goody-goody: I'm a woman who does things."

She said, "Everything costs—I pay what it costs, I keep going."

Her bedroom was a suite of rooms, two dressing rooms, and a bathroom in two parts with a low wall between the parts; and there was a sleeping porch. It was almost half the second floor of the house. She lay on a chaise with a damp cloth over her face. Sometimes she walked and paced and talked; sometimes she raved: "People are bad, why doesn't everyone know people are bad—"

She would say, "I'm going to get hold of myself in another hour; I'm tired of my headaches carrying on; what I want is for the bats in my belfry to go bite a few people—let them die, I'm a realist—"

She said, "It's an oppression. Why are people so bad? I swear to God there's no end to it. Even nice people like Annemarie, who's not so nice, believe me. Oh, God, I can't stand it. No one was ever good to me but my *father*. I swear to Christ, I can't stand another day of this, I can't, I can't, it's too hard, it's too *hard*."

When she started to get better, she would almost invariably *count her blessings* (her phrase): "I have to say that Annemarie is a treasure, fat or not; she held down the fort for me when I was *under the weather;* and I don't care if she's nuts or not; I don't care if she gets on people's nerves; and I don't care if she's a hypocrite—let her turn you into a Christ child—I don't care; she's a wonderful woman; she has backbone; and she comes through in a pinch; she takes care of me; when she's around I have a life."

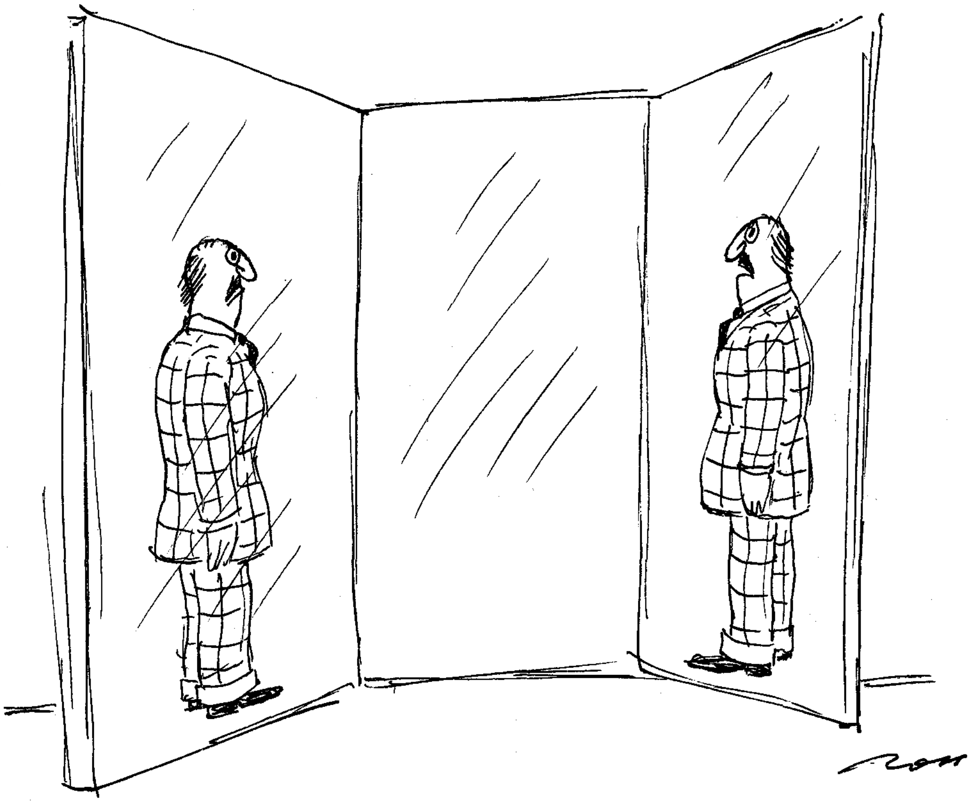
AM I being too realistic? This is a sentimental subject: the nursemaid who saved my life when I was a small child. I'm trying to be accurate in relation to it and not sentimental, not dishonest.

Annemarie's "manner," her voice, her vast body and fat throat, the movements of her nakedly pink and small and interestingly curved lips, these all say that she absents herself from corruption. Momma says, "Well, she's left out, she's never had a life; but she handles it well."

Some of it, Momma says, with jocular little hints, or seriously (if she's being a socialist, then she's seriously sad about Annemarie's deprivations), "Part of what it is is she's sexually reliable. I mean, cold. I don't mean this as an insult, not at all."

Momma says, "It's a cheat, she's been gypped if you ask me, but then it's as plain as the nose on my face what I married S.L. for."

She and S.L. were good-looking, moody people—very good-looking, very moody.


"So? Where is he?"

Momma says, "No one wants Annemarie but there's more to that story than meets the eye. She doesn't fix herself up. Maybe she's got other fish to fry; she was sweet on me for a long time. What it is is I will have to marry her off. I owe her, you know. I think she's scared and won't admit it—who isn't scared in this crazy country? Do you want to know the truth? She's scared and she's a liar—and she's a very, very good woman."

Ma said, "She's been in love with all of us one by one—Wiley's the one she wound up caring about."

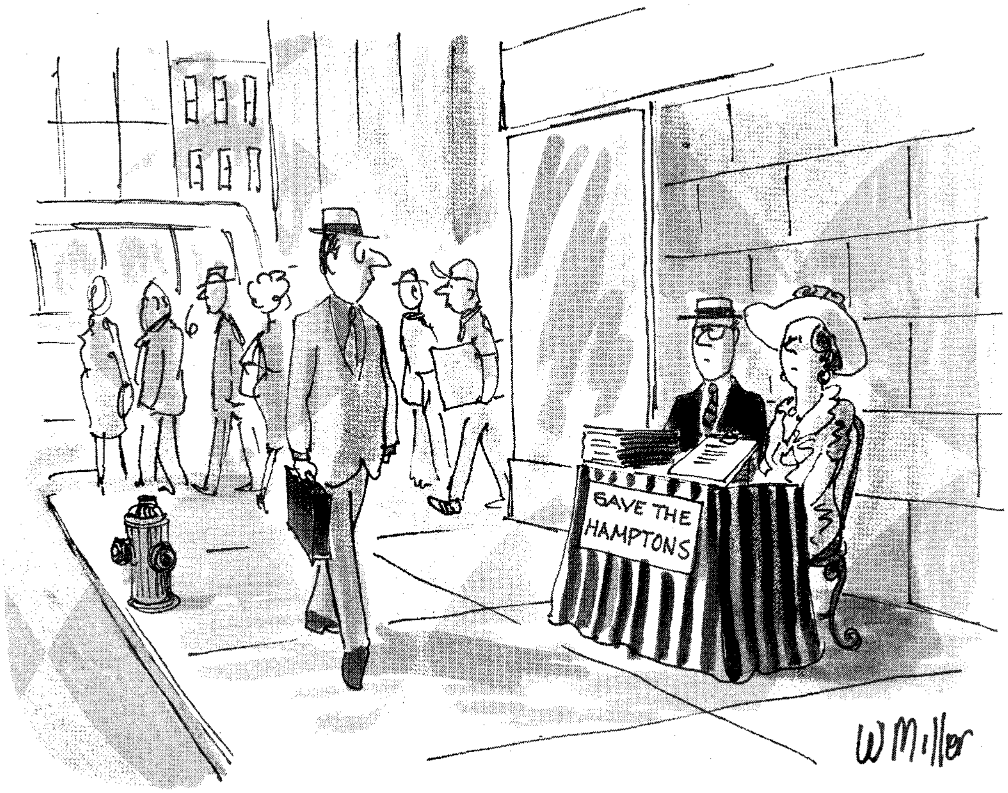
That meant: Lila first, the two women seriously having a crush on each other and taking responsibility for each other's lives in this household, and Annemarie taking care of me out of duty or goodness then. Lila said, "I work like a dog, no one gives me credit, I bought her attentions that you like so much, Mr. Fine-and-Dandy.

"And then she had a little crush on S.L. but his moods wore her out and she got fond of you, you won her over, it was interesting to watch."

Annemarie lived in our and her broth of emotions—a stew, a soup of simultaneous feelings, plots and feuds, and moral and immoral stuff: the *day-by-day* is an intense drama, although we ignore this.

"Once she got on her feet, she became my rival; we had to be rivals; that's the way it is; pretty as I was, she couldn't stop herself; she couldn't stop herself from thinking she was winning; she had to be a rival with Lila Silenowicz just like everyone else; and with S.L.; we were all rivals over you at the start; we all wanted to be the chief nurse; it's no wonder you have a swelled head—she loved you, Wiley, it was handy for her—she was a good nurse to you, she was a good friend to me even when she started to hate me. . . ."

Momma says, "Don't ever laugh at her, don't ever embarrass her, she doesn't have an easy life—we're not easy people, she's good to us, and where would I be without her? I'd be in a loony bin, that's where I would be. Be good to her, Wiley, make her happy, you'll do us all a favor, you'll make us all happy if you can keep her here, if we can keep her crazy temper in line."



Annemarie is sane but she has periods, menstrual periods maybe, when she is "forgetful"—that's Momma's word for a lot of things, Momma being tactful. S.L. says, "When the moon is full, don't put a knife in her hands." Daddy is male and realistic in tone when he talks about violence.

Annemarie is visited by voices at times.

Momma says, "Don't laugh, she thinks she's Joan of Arc."

Annemarie's pallor is a white armor, in my view. She has little vanity of a physical kind, or maybe a lot, but I mean she stays indoors where no one can see her. Perhaps she is unsure of herself around here, in America. Lila says, "She's ashamed she's fat."

Her opinions changed with great swiftness: I can remember her liking S.L. and her liking Lila, and then the next day she despised them.

The household—well, we all agreed then, and in later years we mostly agreed, that we were happy then for a while.

Daddy said, "We had a good time, Littlekins, you remember that, don't you, or are you going to be a blamer?"

I don't know how many months this covers. I think perhaps two years for sure, and probably three and a half, all told.

S.L. said, "That woman was worth her weight in gold, she never liked me but she was handy; I was never that well taken care of before in my life; and it hasn't happened since, I will tell you that."

As I said, sometimes she didn't like him and sometimes she did; he was well taken care of only when she liked him.

Momma said, "S.L., you're insulting, you know that? You exaggerate: you're always taken care of. I'm the one who suffered after we got rid of her. Then there was no one to take care of me. You don't do anything for anyone."

He said, "It was all your idea to get rid of her, I loved that woman, she had a good soul."

He didn't love her; I did. Momma said, "S.L. liked having her wait on him and so did you; but she wouldn't be nice to anyone who wasn't good to you; she thought she was your guardian angel; she didn't even want to get married until you started letting her down." Me? "You wanted to play with other children. One thing I'll say for myself, I was never the jealous, possessive type." Yes, she was. When I was an adolescent and she was ill, she was possessive as hell.

"Annemarie kept S.L. on a tight rein: I enjoyed it. He was a good father and husband under her rule, except when she got in one of her moods about knowing her place and wouldn't talk to him, which wasn't all that often; she didn't like knowing her place. She was jealous of me; you don't know what it cost me to keep her contented and working for you. Men never know what they cost women. Oh, God, I can't stand it—"

(S.L. shouted, "You cost me my life, you bitch-whore, can't you ever know right from wrong?")

Annemarie's goodness, her moral laziness, her helplessness in some areas, her just about infinite self-righteousness—these are the equivalent of Beauty to me.

In her mind, as she looks at me, as she looks around the kitchen, she knows herself to be beautiful here. She is posturing in a way. I believe her belief is true that she is beautiful—I trust her judgment. She is like a fat empress today, with a heavy will, at the royal court.

Both Mom and Dad think Annemarie longs for romance—Dad thinks it's physical, and Momma thinks it's mental and spiritual and financial, that it's a matter of Annemarie's whole life leading up to her having a kingdom somewhere: "That's what women need, a place of their own, where they're boss; what else are we put on this earth for?"

I see her as perfect, as perfect in her attentions to me, but I won't talk, even for her, so I suppose she is imperfect in her goodness.

I used to stare at her a lot. I love her more than I love anyone, *anyone in the world:* S.L.'s phrase. He kept count; he was interested in that stuff, who loved who most. (I swear that Lila once said to him, "Who do you think you are? The Jewish God?")

If my happiness is not too interfered with by anything, I can't see that Annemarie's flaws matter.

"The way he looks at her bribes her; it's worth more than salary."

Her readiness to be with me and to attend to my state is the presence of

FOR THE SECOND MILLENNIUM

I

If one life were enough or eternity
had seasons
and were somehow translatable, glacial,
an enormous braille, or simply scored, a scar, its story,
then you could pan the body waters
for those gold tokens, those tiny arms and legs,

heads, hearts, hands, feet, each affliction
in strict relief
on the sanctuary wall, each soul, if we have one,
in detail, meaning: *After the beating she would not heal . . .*
or, *Like the earth*
I have made stones inside me

to which I've moored myself,
little grief harbors—set me, set me asail . . .
When Guadalupe's cathedral door
swung open nearly twenty years ago, I saw them startle,
shine above the many candles
lit for the sick, the lost,

the compassed cloud of witnesses,
as though pain could be light's companion
out on some sea
among the huge schools of mackerel
that surface in the swells, flash and dive
in unison into the nets

to be hauled up, hauled in along the shore.

II

Tonight across the channel
the unmanned lighthouse beam takes in
this island.
Though it's late in the twentieth century,
if you watch closely
you can make out a man, above the tide line,

sweeping the sand with a contraption
that listens for buried treasure,
coins like the ones in the new airports'
or shopping malls' terrariumed, skylit tile fountains,
which buy a midnight janitor
his cigarettes and coffee.

As for the wishes the coins are proof of,
they seem sometimes to hover
when the crowds pass fanning the water,
blurring
their own reflections, as though later,
airborne above the city, outbound,
or driving home, the donors,

self-blessed, simply for wishing,
greeted more easily the future
carried in the blood, some gene-remembering,
prophetic news, that by the light of synaptic fire calls back
a thousand generations.

—Deborah Digges

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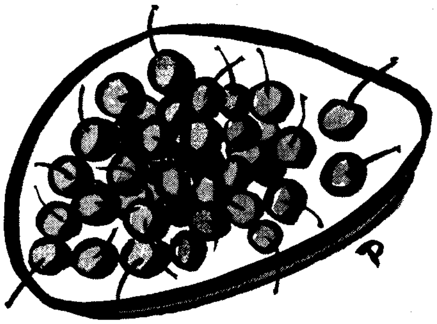
grace. Literally. Lila and S.L. said to me then and to company and to me later that they never saw anything like it, that it was superhuman "the way she takes care of the little one. No one could be more serious, could be more reliable, we are very, very lucky to have her—"

Momma said later, "Some of that was just public relations; I'm good at public relations."

"It was like living next door to a blessing," S.L. said, "and we had it right in our own house." (He is illogical in speech because he is lazy and amused; also, he is illogical to indicate honesty: he told me he was the most honest soul in the world, probably.) "She loved you and it was beautiful to see, no one could see it and not want a piece of it—a piece of the pie, a piece of the peace—and I'll tell you something, she wasn't a nice woman, really, it was all a miracle, it was all an accident, and I'm glad it happened, but sometimes it breaks my heart that it happened and it's all gone away now."

I remember it in bits and pieces and sort of over all.

The heat, the passion, the foreignness, the foreign accent, and at the same time the flaccidity of her attention as she thinks about herself, those things, and her claims and postures of goodness, they are what healed me and helped me most steadily. I can remember the course and the detours of her moods, but I tend not to when the savor of reality of the *happiness* appears in my mind. Like pain, it banishes what is not itself and all memories that are not in harmony with it. The sensation of happiness is so strong that sometimes even merely the recall of happiness when I am going to sleep can strengthen me against the dark or when I wake can change the nature of waking up.



I am with Annemarie in the kitchen. What am I supposed to do with my life now?

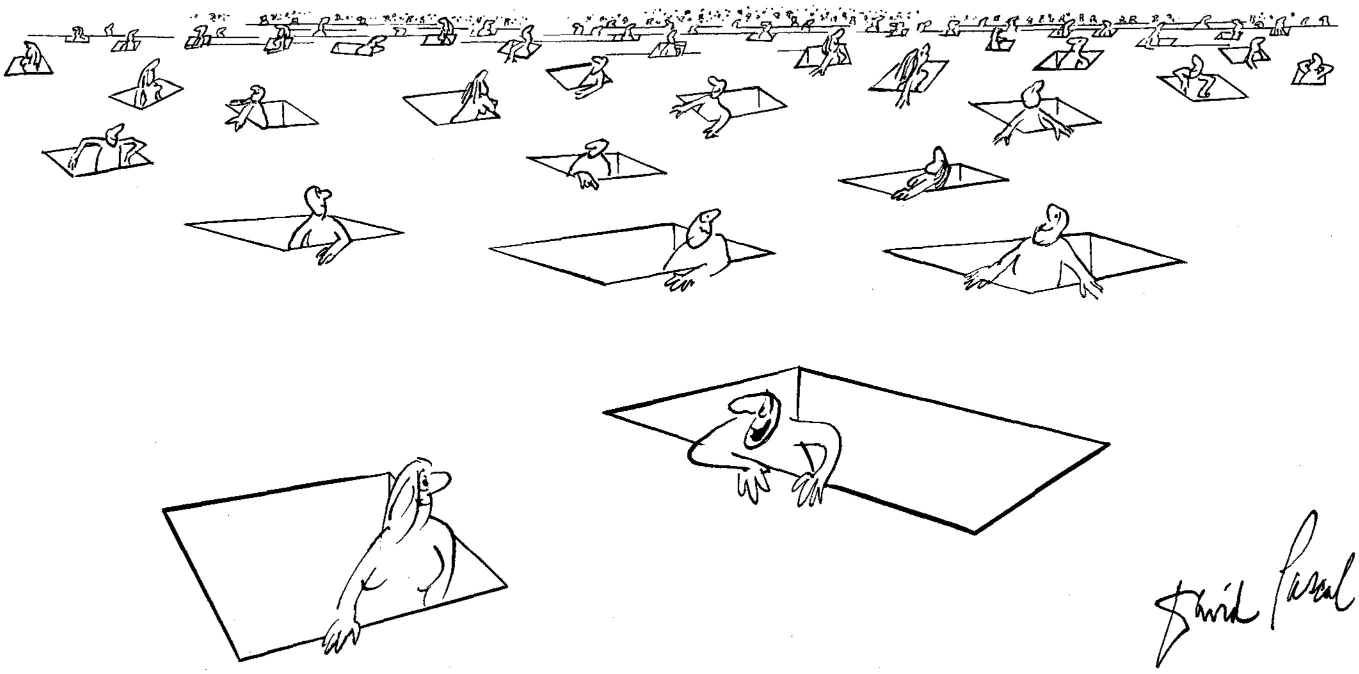
"*You had only a weak grip on life; we all knew it; we weren't good about it.*"

How was it that I saw around Annemarie's instabilities and oddities of temperament, saw my way to an improbable state of happiness for at least enough moments out of those available every day—that I lived? I lived and am grateful and will be until I die?

Perfect Love: she showed you perfect love; it wasn't so perfect but you know what I mean.

I never thought about how unlikely that was, how improbable—actually, impossible—perfect love. I mean, that wasn't it; it wasn't perfect love that saved me.

You idolized her: Lila's testimony.



"Lovely weather. Everybody's out."

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She means, in part, that I idealized Annemarie.

I remember my happiness back then as a fixed condition even while I remember myself as upset or lonely, and the happiness as moderate, or modest at times, and immoderate and immodest at other times, and huge—huge—all I could manage in those days, or still. It is amazing to me, the pious neatness of my memories of her as long as I don't remember a single moment as it really was. My sense of her poses her in various aspects in this light and that one, on a porch in the sun, or by the lilac hedge in the sun, near where we emptied garbage; but the memory leaves the garbage out usually; and I remember her on my bed with her braid hanging down her back and her hand massaging my belly, the child's small belly. She is quiet-voiced; that is part of it. She moves always gently. I will always like people who speak German in a soft voice.

But it's not true. In actuality, her voice was on the loud side; it was trained and odd, and singular. And I don't like German at all as a language.

I used to wonder that I had no memory of Annemarie singing and no memory of her actual speaking voice, that I only remembered my being happy or her holding me, carrying me.

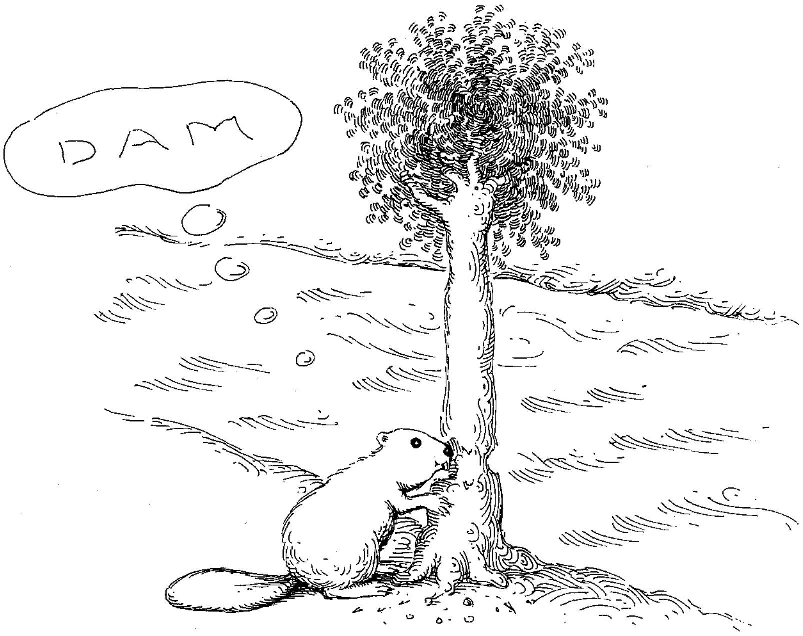
I do not think memory lies for a cheap reason. It is just that memory deals in totals, in summaries, in portable forms of knowledge, so that what it dredges up are things that are like mottoes or aphorisms or apothegms rather than like real moments. And the totals are often *true enough* as they are pictured, even if the pictured thing never happened but is a total, a mind thing, just as what's in a photograph never happened but is the machine's slice of a part of reality, which it then slides out sideways, so to speak, from the forward rush of real air. Time was never that stilled; the photograph lies; the eyelike machine slices off a thin and fixed souvenir; what gives it focus makes it untrue—no one I know was ever as still as a photograph.

The myth, the lie, I don't know what to call it, the distortion that I could say was love but seems to me to be merely self-absorption on a not very elevated scale, that presents Annemarie as silver, as shining and steady, and humanly and inhumanly gentle and good and fierce in my defense and so on, often that seems to me more valuable than the truth is, much more valuable to me. But I want to be fair to Annemarie, to her life; I want not to condescend and treat Annemarie as a shadow, as a shadow employed by shadows; and I do not want to be stuck with the notion that all goodness is to be measured by someone's being good to *me;* and I remember Lila's saying, "I don't want to be on a pedestal, I want to be liked for what I am. Maybe I shove it down people's throats, what I am, but I can't help that, I want to live, I want someone to know me."

ANNEMARIE and I are in the kitchen that rainy morning, we are nutty with approval of each other. It is immense approval but not unquestioning, not *ideal.* Perhaps that is not quite the truth: one whole side of the mind is entirely devoted to this approval; it is a complete or absolute state, for a second or two, on one side of the mind.

She assumes (it seems nearly always) that I have to go to the bathroom. I sit patiently there on the damp wood of the toilet seat holding myself to the rim with my hands so I won't slide in, *fall in*, Daddy says: it makes him laugh when I do start to fall in. Upstairs I have a plastic seat with a back and straps on it that fits over a toilet but I won't let anyone strap me in; I prefer to risk *falling in* and being laughed at; Annemarie now likes it that I like to deal with the grownup proportions of things.

"Vunderrrrbarrrrr—



niiiiiiiiiiiiiz(ccsc)e—nyce—" she shows off a merely technical reproduction of a short Midwestern syllable "—liddle dee-mun—you deffil(ll)—*Ritter*—"

Knight. Cavalier.

Good God, the *feelings* . . .

My frail eyelids, my leaning head now, my trusting stare: she glances at these. She never gazes—never—not when she is visible. She shows a (German) slyness, pride, honor; she has a maybe sly, nervous quickness of tempo. And her self-righteousness and her Nordic gloom sit on top of that. She denies being gloomy. She has a determined cheerfulness atop the gloom. I am dozing as I sit here under her glancing regard; I mimic her oblique and glancing approach that way; my eyelids are open but I am adoze, sort of; my mind is turned off; or rather it is sheer openness, as when I am asleep and the world is mostly just me; I trust her so, it is like that—*she is a dream* (Momma's phrase).

She straightens up; she is daydreaming; she often daydreams; she daydreams of me sometimes or of a child like me she won't have to share with Lila and S.L.; she would love me more if they were dead—maybe not; maybe being rivalrous with them is the root of Our Perfect Love. ("She built her life on outdoing me in the end, and she was one of the ones who won out, except I had you, Wiley, and she didn't, her children never came to amount to anything. Yet. And I'll be dead before they do.") She daydreams about me and mercy and goodness when I am there in front of her; and mercy and goodness *are* there so far as I know; but she wants more, this isn't enough, *she wants a house of her own and children of her own and I don't blame her*, Momma says; but I do. If I interrupt her, her eyes grow big and knowing and stare at me, but they don't see me; she only sees me in those quick glances—a longish look makes her somehow subject to me, almost submissive, daydreamish: I am the son of her employers.

I climb down from the toilet, stand there big-eyed, vague for a moment, much stirred physically; and then I walk behind her into the kitchen. I hold myself back in mood, as-a-duty and as-a-pleasure. I do not know that I have an appetite for wild or perhaps dependent kinds of caresses. She has a similar stiffness. We mimic each other—she is babyish. She is religious, a Lutheran. Annemarie has become an eccentric and covert Christianity in me; this is a secret about me.

She is openly contemptuous of Ma and Pa at times, and visitors—especially about the issues, those questions of if and how I am to be kissed and touched; these issues, and what my moral and religious nature is and what proper care of a small, unhappily bereaved child is like.

Ma will say in a little while, *I guess I have to buy her off if I want to be master in my own house*. She means she will have to Get Rid of Her Someday—maybe soon.

Ma said, *Annemarie is not the same as me; she works for me*.

Annemarie is not the same as anyone—she is not like anyone; she is a singularity in the world.

She is going to feed me but she pauses to announce, to remember she is happy because of me: "You did goot, *Liebchen*."

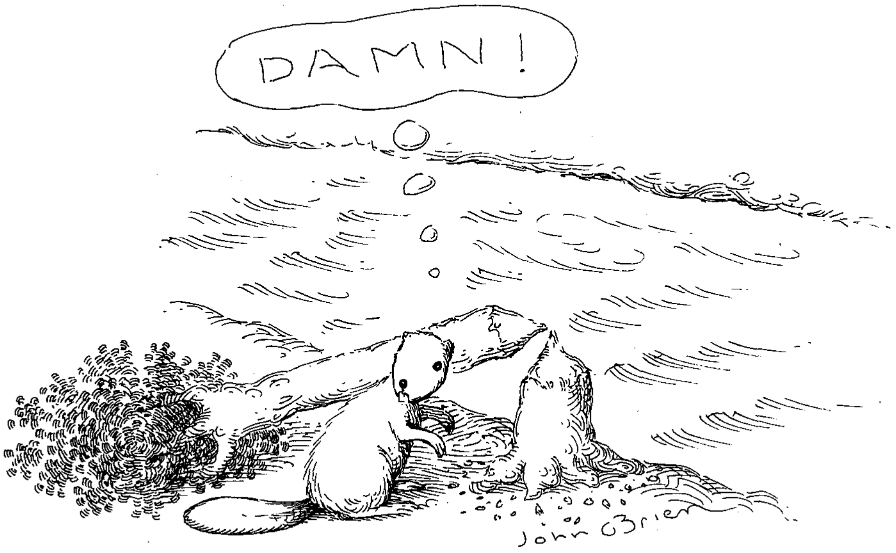
Oh, how I love her.

Momma has a dark theory that says good people have to get even with you for their goodness: she means goodness is a martyrdom: "My mother devoted her life to me, and you know what that means? That means she ate my life right up; she ruined me a thousand times over. Who do you think picked S.L. for me? Momma did. He wouldn't get in her way. Well, S.L. and me, we tried to run off; we tried to make a go of it away from her and all of them, but S.L. couldn't make it as a businessman; and I missed Momma. I'm not blaming anyone; I'm not even blaming her; I wanted to be her favorite child and I was; and I'll tell you something, I'm going to die young as a result; I can feel it in my heart. And I'll tell you something else: she does me mostly harm but she loves me, and she'll never outlive me; when I get sick, she won't nurse me, she'll hide, and she'll get sick, and she'll die in her guilt and praising herself the whole time. I know a few things in this world, and of the things I know, Momma is the chief one of them."

Lila was right.

"Annemarie was no good for you after a while but I was afraid if she left, you'd get sick again. But in the end I took the plunge; she only wanted to make you her slave."

Lila said, "I do good, I like getting my own way, but I'm not a homebody, God forbid; we employ five in help. Annemarie, who is really family; we have a crippled gardener who does some house repairs, but he's no good, our house is turning into a slum—just look and you'll see. We have a laundry woman; a man who does our heavy cleaning—woodwork, windows; and we have a part-time car person. It's very hard; they all want to be family; they suck my blood dry."



In the oratorio or chorus of women, Momma, the coloratura—"I'm a dazzler, for better or for worse, that's my fate"—will now sing, or, rather, Lila will say to company about Annemarie and me: "*She has no one else to love, she has to love him; really, who else does she have? She's a maid, she's a housekeeper; it's an impossible position; my heart goes out to her: she's coarse in some ways: German—she's a German hammer.*" A German amour? German and hammy? Hamlike?

"*A German hammer*": Momma is clumsy and just grabs at words.

She means Annemarie is obstinate and strong, very strong in being not forced to hide in her bedroom as often as Momma is in hers. She means Annemarie's noisy when she climbs the stairs and carries things; Annemarie breathes loudly, and that hammers at Momma, who has "the nerves of a bird, you know what that's like?" Momma means Annemarie is a pork-lover, like Joseph, father of Christ, a carpenter with a hammer, and a fool maybe, a cuckolded fool; and she means Annemarie is hammy and a Valkyrie—she just plows all that together and says Annemarie is a German hammer.

My mother was a lover of rhetoric. And she means yet more: Momma used to say, "Use your head, try to understand me, don't make me go on and on."

One of Annemarie's prides is that she doesn't ever get tired. She believed her goodness and her "common sense" made her strong. She did not "give in to" the exhaustions and the having-to-catch-her-breath moments that Momma had; Momma said, "I can tell you from experience there's no rest for the wicked." Annemarie pauses; she leans against a counter; Annemarie has a great deal of will, so that even though in actuality she is catching her breath, after an inner dialogue—with someone who insulted her, maybe—she starts to hum, she makes a low, vibrant, very pretty noise, too sharp in pitch, maybe, for childish comfort; she hums as if music were her purpose, and not the moment's otherwise physical stillness. Similarly, she wrestles with a jar lid, a jar of "abblesawz," as if that made her happy. Maybe she really isn't ever tired and my belief that she is is just my perception after all. She stops humming; she breathes deeply; she moves. Now she's fatly speeding up again. Her readiness to be good to me was really an off-again, on-again thing, but steadied by her simplicity in naming how she felt. So that now she says, she carols sort of, "*Ich liebe dich, meine Liebe.*" She takes pleasure in my company and feels something like the thing Daddy feels when he compliments her on her cooking: "You know what Browning said, Annemarie? He said, 'God's in His Heaven—All's right with the world.' "

She carols, "*Werke, Werke, Werke, Werke, Werke, la—la-ah-hhh.*"

She's singing about her work in the world—I mean she's really singing about it.

She often works without thinking; she makes messes of things; now the applesauce spills from the jar she is jerking around while she sings, and some of it slops on her dress. She is startled; she purses her lips; perhaps she counts to a certain number; then she says, "Littull Vfiiilileee, *Ich liebe dich, mein Liebchen.*"

Momma said, "Annemarie's never getting tired gets expensive. I lost a silk blouse and three cotton singlets this week, all burned by her with her magic iron. Well, live and let live. But I wish she were more modest, I'll say it to God and to you but I won't say it to her—I'm scared of her."

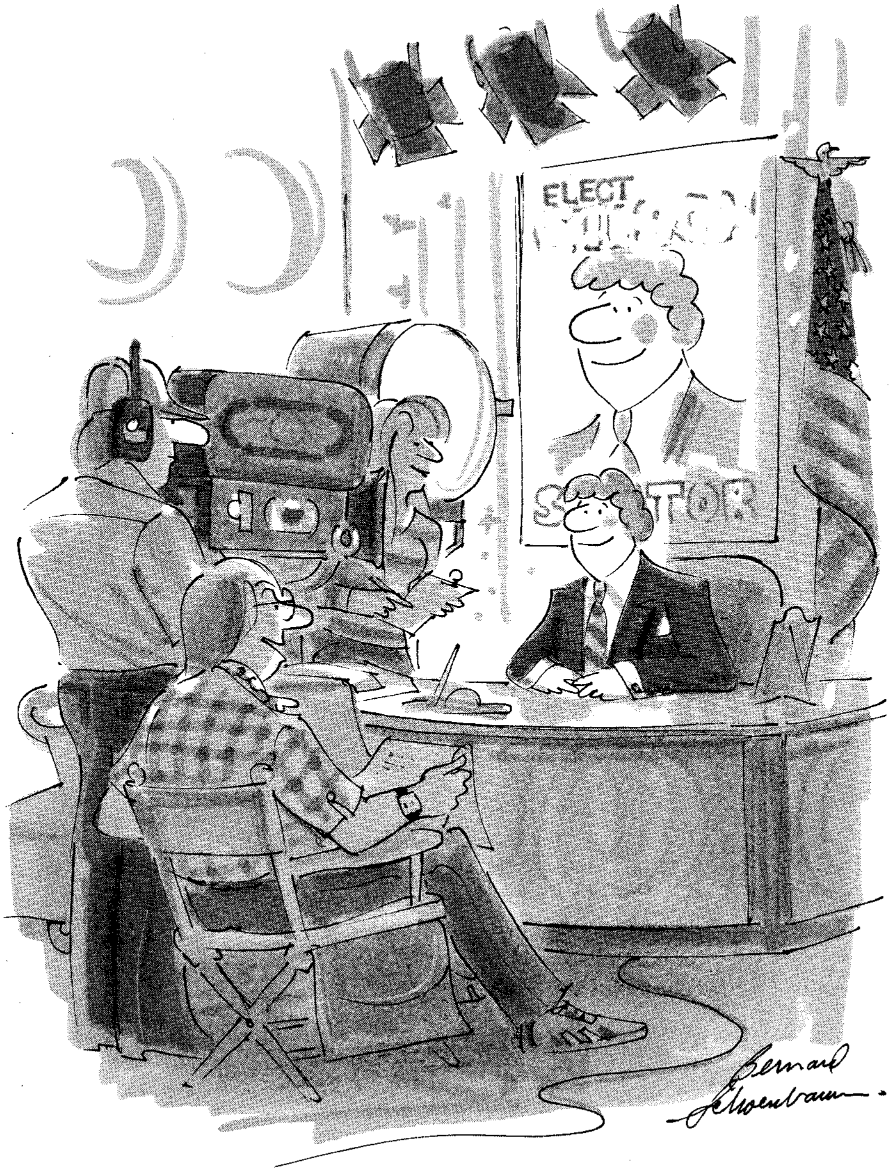
Ma said, "Annemarie is very religious but she's just about only as Christian as it suits her; she's a young woman; you can't tell because she's heavy, but she's young."

Annemarie has a kind of set expression on her face in order to appear tireless and unchanging, also deep-souled, although her mind is wandering: this is a major tactic of hers.

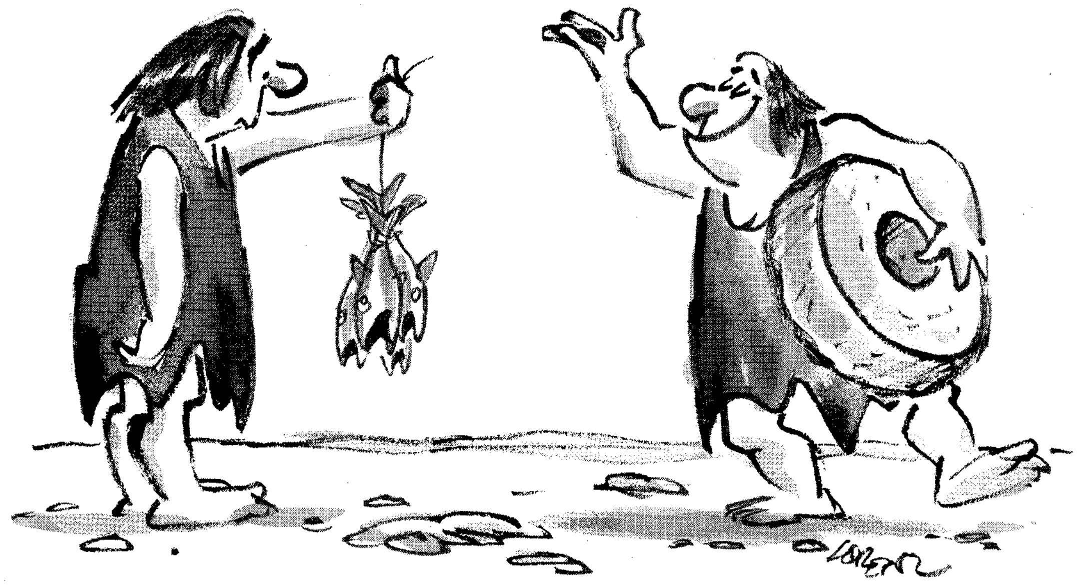
Momma said, "People can be what they want; if they're boring, it's because they want to be boring; boring people can say what they want about themselves, and no one will check up on it because no one cares. Good-looking people get watched all the time. Isn't that the point? If you ask me, it takes nerve to look good; good looks are the big risk; all looks are a risk; you need brains knowing how to look good; you need brains to know how to withstand the pressure. Plain people don't have to be honest; it suits them to lie; and they do, they lie to themselves and everyone else all the time: it's a different way to live, there are a lot of advantages in being plain, believe me. I know whereof I speak."

I saw in Annemarie the physical choice to be plain. The ferocity of her self-definition was like that of a very rich woman. She wanted to be rich and she often acted as if she were, as if she owned houses and farms and had a great deal of money besides. She died a rich woman by local standards.

LILA said, "I married her off; it wasn't easy; she was an impossible person; but you know something, it wasn't that, it was her looks; men were uncertain about her because of the way she looked; and she had no family—men marry families, some men do; they marry to get the answers to questions, and a family has its ways. But here she was, a wonderful, wonderful cook, a housekeeper who knew how to do it, a woman who sang, she had a lovely, lovely voice: and no one wanted her. The man who took her got a good deal; she made a good life for people—there were poor men who would have taken her in a minute but what good is that? She was proud; she would have died with a poor man—I had my work cut out for me, believe me; I had to find somebody for her, we had specifications, I had to shop around. She couldn't get along with women, that was a defect, you know—finally I heard about this old German widower in Lillyburg, a real character: he was fat as a house; he had a lot of land, no mortgage, and a little money put aside; my brother's foreman at the junk yard met him at a funeral and told me about him. I drove her to the church he went to, in Frederickville, that's about ten miles from Lillyburg. Of course, he hoped it was me; he thought Annemarie was the old married woman trying to marry *me* off; I was really something to look at, you know; I had my hair long that year, and I was wearing my fur coat—well, he liked her well enough but what he really liked was talking to me. I told him there was no one to match her. Well, he was fat and she was fat; and they struck a deal. But she didn't want you to be sad. She was afraid you'd have a relapse and die. I let her new boyfriend come to the house once to see how we lived, because we would be like relatives maybe; she knew how to keep a nice house; but you were so suspicious it scared us; we could see you smelled a rat. I can't tell you all that went on; it was a farce of the first water, S.L. scooting around the house and being nice to the fat people, and all of us feeding you a cock-and-bull story." So I wouldn't die at the loss of my happiness. "She said the farmer looked like a blimp, that he was made out of pancakes; she had a mean tongue; what she said was true; and he had a mustache, a dyed mustache; and Annemarie was being, oh you know, pick any word, she was being it; and you were hanging around, you always thought you knew everything. It was a real pleasure to fool you, but everyone got sad—I guess it was the end of an era for us—and it was just too real what was happening to her: she was going to go live on a farm; he didn't have a house in town yet; she was going to have furniture; I negotiated that; she was to do the front room and one bedroom over, he'd pay for that; and I gave her the pots and pans and a set of old silver plate; it would be valuable now; and I gave her two thousand dollars. He wanted five, but I just kept smiling at him and teasing him, and he came down; it was the principle of the thing with him. I had to guarantee her teeth; I had to take her to our dentist and get a note, can you imagine, a note about her molars, her wisdom teeth; he wanted no dental bills. He thought maybe she was lying about her age. He was a strange old goat—poor Annemarie, she got no romance. He was a miser. You want to know what life is like, I'll tell you: she wanted to marry someone with money; well, what she could get was a miser widower twenty years older than she was; and I'll tell you something else: even so that was a lot better than running this house and running after you all day long while you did what you wanted. I made S.L. lend them his car, but S.L. was persnickety about who drove his car; so he found a powder-blue Ford, powder blue was Annemarie's favorite color, and we paid for it. You know, we were



"Lights! Camera! Electability!"



WHEN THE INVENTOR OF THE WHEEL MET THE INVENTOR OF THE DEAL

crazy about Annemarie, we couldn't do enough for her; but everything costs money, and it gets complicated. Don't look so suspicious; I'm not lying; I was sick to death and tired of having her underfoot all the time—now, sit still, I want to tell you a funny part; it's a sad part, too. If you know anything, you know you have to feel sorry for people—not you, you're heartless; you don't feel sorry for anyone. They were both so heavy the car broke down the first time they went out.

"The Ford—oh, it's not fair, I know that, but learn from me: it's not fair but sometimes you have to laugh. There she was, thirty if she was a day, still a young woman—no, she was twenty-seven, just twenty-seven; if she'd been thirty, he could have *insisted* on five thousand. The idea was she wasn't going to him to work; she was going to stay home and have a woman's life; or I couldn't have talked her into any of it—but she was just young enough to whet his appetite; he thought he was getting a bargain. But people are funny, Wiley; he liked her; they were like kids in a way, new at everything, not very free and easy; they were scared of things. He had an accent, too, did I tell you, so he couldn't laugh at her accent; but they neither one had the nerve to go someplace like a restaurant for regular Americans; they weren't comfortable in those places. People did look at them; he looked like a farmer; he had a big, ugly neck, you know—some people think you have to laugh at people—so they went mostly to church things, where people were nice to them, within reason. It's not nice but that's how it was. They were on a bridge and the car broke down—my God. He was scared of heights, and Annemarie had to go get help. Those things happen: we found the car for them and it broke down—no wonder. Annemarie wasn't grateful when it was all over—well, you don't know how shy she was; you never paid attention; you thought she was God and had no faults; but she was crazy she was so shy. I think once she got married she never left her house—I mean until they got rich and travelled to Europe. And back. She couldn't stand anyone looking at her, men or women; boys were maybe the worst for her; it was physical for her. I don't know if it was psychological or not; but it was shame; it was the real reason she was a maid—people don't really look at you, they look at you differently. If you ask me, she never got over anything; she was a very smart woman with no education to speak of—a little churchy stuff and some music. She used to hint I should get a piano, me with my headaches having a piano in the house, a piano and a dog and quintuplet children is what I needed, I told her.

"Well, you know, no one thought she was right in the head, she was just so strange, the issue was she looked like a crazy woman and that made her shy. I could always bluff, I could run rings around her if I didn't have a headache; I could get around her right and left; but she didn't like that; she got very cold to me.

"You were very dependent on her, you enslaved her, you were always throwing up and doing I don't know what; but I used my head, I told you stories while I fed you, and you survived, the secret with you was you were nosy, I found it out. I may not like children but I have eyes in my head.

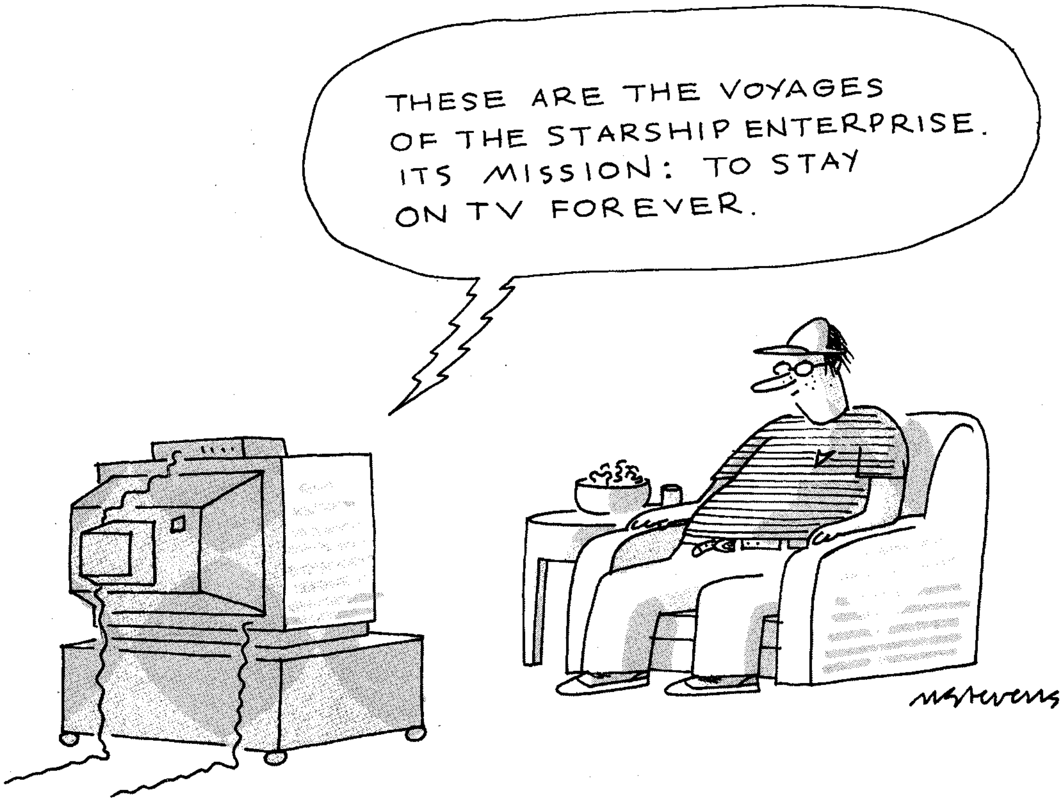
"She didn't want you to know she was seeing a man, and, believe me, she changed her mind about that poor man a hundred times before we were done; I wanted her to tell you so you'd know; I wanted you to know who your real friends were: a mother is a mother, and a maid is a maid. But I'll tell you the truth, when it came right down to it I didn't have the nerve to tell you. And S.L. didn't. And she didn't—so I knew you'd be angry with her, and maybe it was for the best. So everything was hush-hush and tiptoe-tiptoe. S.L. would drive her downtown and the farmer would pick her up there and we'd tell you another cock-and-bull story; and she called to say the car broke down; she was in a state, a real state; she'd had to walk on the bridge and along the road, and all the cars, all the people in cars, stared at her; well, you just don't know what that's like for someone who's crazy with shyness, a strong woman like that, a fat woman with a heavy accent who doesn't want to be stared at. She went all the way to a gas station because she wasn't going to stop at anyone's house or a roadside place, people she didn't know, and have them hear her accent; and we all thought in those days that if she didn't get back to you by your bedtime you'd wind up in the crazy house. And you probably would have. Two years seven months, maybe down the drain, everyone was watching us, to see if we had to throw you back in the pond; it would have been terrible. I can be grownup about those things but Annemarie was very, very self-conscious.

"You know, her breasts weren't big; she was just heavy; she really wanted people to think well of her; she was self-conscious as if she were physically very different from the way she was, like no one could stop looking at her one way or the other; and maybe she would have been like that if she'd ever done anything about herself; but she never did. She was just a fat woman.

"You can be bossed around by that and never have a life at all, you know—well, she was just desperate, just desperate; and she had no humor; people say Jews don't have humor; but they should know Annemarie. I don't remember a single joke except sarcasms; she had no humor; she was going to die; she was having a fit at a gas station; you were going to die; she was in a gas station at some dinky crossroads not far from Lillyburg—it was just terrible—and, to tell you the truth, you were pacing around the house, you were pale as death, you were very bossy at that time, you thought you owned the house, you thought your health came first, and you were getting ready to carry on because she wasn't there. And she's hysterical, too, just hysterical, everyone's looking at her, she's out on the open road, oh my, oh my. I had to call everyone; I got someone to go bring her back to the house and someone to go help him with his Ford; he was like a fish out of water with his accent, too, you know; and she saw she had to get away from you then or she'd never get away; and why shouldn't she have a life of her own, she deserved a life, she'd done enough for us, she'd done a lot for you, too much, you were spoiled, we never could control you after she left, you wouldn't ever be nice to S.L. If you couldn't have her, you thought we were never nice to you—

"And she was just as bad—she thought I was a witch. But there I was, giving up my life, my comfort, throwing away the best household help I ever had, right out the window, and no one appreciated that—oh, she appreciated it some but she felt too humiliated, too humiliated and too eager, she wanted money. You wanted to know if she was happy, you wanted to know how it all happened—well, she didn't like my system, my not telling you and just doing it, just disappearing, her going off and not coming back, but S.L. every time he tried to tell you, he gave up, and the atmosphere in the house was terrible. I'm not lying much—I honestly don't remember. It was a big thing then but I've had other things in my life. We wouldn't have done it if you hadn't started to (of) talked by then. Of course, you knew something was wrong, so she lied to you, then she felt terrible, finally she just went off—and we told you. I told you, S.L. was scared to. I told you you might as well start getting over it, because she was never coming back, and suffering never helped anyone, and it wasn't good for your looks. You came home from a car ride with my brother Henry one day—he was sweet to you, he worried about you—and Annemarie was gone and I told you what happened and you just went into your room and wouldn't come out, this went on for days but you got over it, oh you were so easy to fool. I got all dressed up, I put on makeup and some jewels and took you down to the kitchen, and I had perfume, and you just sat and watched me like you were already dead. I told you a story like a fairy story about a woman like Annemarie who wanted a house and who wanted little boys just like you to come out of her own belly and she wanted a farmer, she went to live with a farmer, and you said, 'In the dell,' so if you were talking cute I figured you'd survive.

"She called, naturally she called, so then I told her she shouldn't see you, it was better not—cut it off clean, get it over—until some time passed. She got angry at me and said I'd tricked her—can you imagine? After all I'd done for her, and although I say it, I did a lot for her, trust me on this, and I did it for her good, I knew what her heart's desires were, but it wasn't enough. She wanted more, she wanted everything. She said I laughed at her and got just what I wanted. What did she expect—that I was a fool? In


THESE ARE THE VOYAGES OF THE STARSHIP ENTERPRISE. ITS MISSION: TO STAY ON TV FOREVER.
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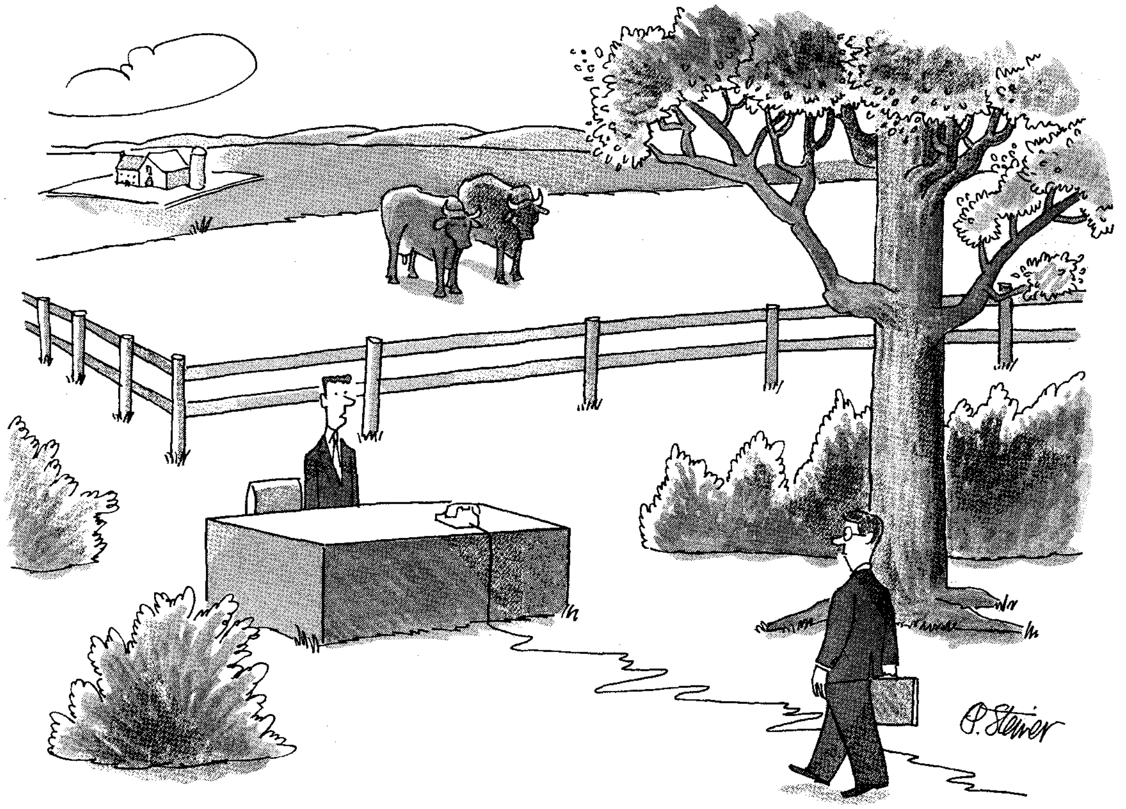

"Walter! What brings you out to the Ohio office?"

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this life nothing is free, you have to pay for things; so she wouldn't talk to me, she wouldn't do me any favors—that was my reward.

"So whatever I know, I know only from hearsay. I heard she wore black a lot; I heard they got along better than you might think. I heard she was very charitable—with everyone but me, I guess—you know, you never know with Christians; money's not the least of it with them; she told me she didn't approve of usury but I guess her disapproval died a natural death when she got a chance at it herself—I heard she and her husband lent money; they were moneylenders and they got into funny business, although I will say this, she had a good reputation around that little town, Lillyburg—so she couldn't have been too grasping.

"Who knows, who knows anything? Who knows what it was really like for someone like her? I'll tell you something: I hope she was lucky; she was a good woman and she deserved to have a good time, but I don't think someone like that knows how. She didn't know much, and a lot of what she knew was me. I bet she dressed like me . . .

"Oh, I don't want to sound cynical; you want a happy ending, I'll give you one: the last time I saw her was six months after her wedding, she came to ask about you. I wouldn't let her see you, and she was sad, she looked happy when she arrived, but she was sad, she was angry with me, she said unpleasant things. She was a hard worker and a hard judge—I'll tell you the truth: she was happy telling me hard things about myself. . . . Isn't that a happy ending? She thought you were wonderful, but you were more trouble than any six other children in the state. She said to tell you she liked you and she missed you—I think I told you that at the time, but you didn't want to hear, and, anyway, what she said I was to tell you was too sentimental for me to repeat. But really, Wiley, she really did care about you, I'll vouch for that, she watched over you night and day—it's too bad it was so harmful. I never can see why it is things can't work out, but they never do, are you old enough to know that yet?"

ANNEMARIE always made it a moral issue with me that I believe her whether she actually lied or not. I was to trust her, trust her motives, trust her love and my luck and God's will with the world, and not blame or doubt her. I can't see that I ever did, although in the real world she was good to me as such things go.

When she talked, Annemarie's phrases were short, politely unastonished, often commanding. She owed it to God to talk like that, sort of. And that made it hard to know what she meant, since if she was tired, and I knew she was, I would still hear her say to people that she wasn't. I believed I was supposed to agree with her and take her literally and trust her, whatever she said.

Annemarie would say she was cheerful: "I'm *gute*—I'm always *gute*—ha ha ha."

But sometimes she was angry, sometimes low in spirits. She suffered queerly strong dips of will that seemed to move her toward being black-spirited, a berserk melancholy that was very willful, that vibrated with anger and maybe with some deep physical pain or dysfunction that didn't stop her from working; when she was like that, the house seemed to tremble until she was better. She might toss her head or do some version of a physically appealing act, but hers would be a gross version, *like a circus elephant* (Momma's mean phrase) *or like a circus horse: take your pick*, and she would say she was good, nothing was ever wrong with her.

I remember listening in wonder at the considerable difference each time in what she said, even when the syllables and circumstances were similar to each other. *Gute* might sound more like "good" or less like "good," and she might be anywhere in the spectrum from very sad to very angry or in a good mood really and without sarcasm, or in a good mood but sarcastic and self-effacing, when she said it. The word, *gute*, the word was offered as if it had a fixed social quality, as if *it did her credit*—the last phrase is Momma's.

She paid attention to what women wore, but not shrewdly or acutely—and, according to Momma, Annemarie didn't listen to women at all and that was a mistake "for someone in her position: men aren't going to teach her anything, you know."

Sometimes Annemarie was *sensitive to what was going on* (Momma's phrase) with an energy and coerciveness that make me shiver even now. "You really behaved for her and for no one else": S.L. said that.

The idea of loving her was warm and heaped up, like leaves, or dirty laundry at the bottom of the laundry chute.

I sit in the hurly-burly of Annemarie's stillness and fixities of goodness and her claims of good judgment. I watch her lift a spoonful of cottage cheese and applesauce, the only two foods I can manage; and I am suspended inside my fear of sickness as well as inside my trust of her. We have our drama of trust and digestion or distrust and nervous anorexia. Failure condemns me, or perhaps condemns us both—both, if we are sincerely attached to each other.

I look at Annemarie. I contemplate swallowing the applesauce. I live and tremble; and spasms of nausea assail me, every smell and every sight of food, every one, forces me toward illness. I teeter now on some borderline between illness and just managing not to be ill. Cramps, the inner twisting of my pained self, push my consciousness toward the opening of the pit of illness while I cling to the sight of Annemarie. I will be ill if I eat, just as surely as the floor will hold my weight if I stand on it, but I trust her that it is required that I eat. This is in the real world, this drama of my nausea and her pride.

She knows what's going on—more or less. She knows my life depends on her, on her knowledge of things. I have to believe not just in the real nature of her wishing me well but in the real nature of her ability to see what I can't see, things about life that make it O.K. for me to suffer this, this loss of control when I swallow—that make it O.K. and *reasonable* to live in these circumstances; she oversees the chance or vague hope of meaning in these circumstances—ill luck, ill health, all of it. She is surer of her purposes than Momma is of hers.

I start to swallow the stringy homemade applesauce, it has cinnamon on it; my eyes bug out and it seems to me likely that I'm going to die. She averts her eyes strenuously—vibratingly—she does it *pointedly*, for the sake of my dignity—she doesn't like to be looked at ever, even when she's not throwing up. If I look at her hard when I'm not sick I get drunk on the sight. She might be sitting on my bed and I will wriggle and twist if I look; and later, when I was stronger, I did jump up and down and grab at and muss her hair and throw myself on her, her neck, or her shoulder, or even her lap, where I wriggled and burrowed and made faces as if I were blind-eyed and digging. I could be noisy; I could be "wild"—"*vuhhh-hi-eldd*(*t*) Vuh-iii-leee"—I often suffered just because the sight of her enflamed me, set fire to vats of feelings in me and then spilled them in patterns of fire, in molten tides in me, and I made her suffer then, too; I made her join me—she and I had dozens of ways of more than banishing loneliness, of transforming it into some papery thing of time and laziness and distance; and then we jumped through, we tore it up, we burst through the hoop, we butted and stared and meddled and served each other until we were together in a paper chamber of silly, childish, and nursing companionship and collaboration. She seemed to believe in all my outcries, some of which were so tiny that some people never noticed them. She believed the ill child was not a liar, was not so ill, would not always be ill, was worth *the time and labor and pain to her nerves* (Lila said this: *Where I just would blow up, you drove me mad, and I thought you wanted to be sick, as far as I could see you just wanted attention and you didn't care what happened to whoever took care of you, well, I'm not that sort of sucker, believe me*). She was rarely mournful in front of me; she was cheerful and unyielding and strong; and since a child's trust is slavish, she had more power over me than an empress would have: S.L. said that; and it was the power of life and death.

Forbearance on both sides was really pretty vast between me and Annemarie—often: not always. Sometimes she was too passionate, and sometimes she was too cold, but she never winced or flinched as Lila did—or as S.L. did. Lila flinched at the smells and at the pain, and S.L. could set himself to bear the smells but never the pain. "*He was no good near anybody or anything that*

ARTHUR J. TRENT
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

suffered; if you hadn't cheered up, we couldn't have kept you in the house—"

The spasm of illness, of nausea and retching, well, I throw myself on it, as onto the sand in a sandbox or pit or at the shore, and I hug it to make it be still, I do this out of love, the spasms become a determined spasm of love seesawing around a spasm of illness—it's very like ejaculation later (when I am older), awake or in dreams—and it is how I will experience pain from now on.

We are like teammates, or fellow-congregants, or communicants—and yet we are not: we are like lovers or brother and sister—we have a community of feeling here, a literally warm thing.

She knows a lot; she can see—even with her eyes averted—how a spasm of love rides on top of the nausea in me; she sees me wrestling with the bull-stench of nausea—and then, uh, ah, er, all *hell* broke loose, because I lost; and nausea won; it erupted; it asserted itself and entered the world—and I am racked, twisted. But except on the first days, the first weeks, not freely so: I fight, and I fight it some more; I fight and fight—in her name, of course—and then it didn't go so far, the nausea; I managed to swallow a lot of it back, to keep some food down—I can wear out the sickness or nervousness in my own body in her name; using her will, sometimes, her will to fight; I did it. I sat there, shaking and pale, feeling more ill now than during the worst part of the spasm, since I felt more conscious than at the worst of the spasm. I want to die except I want to please Annemarie, too.

I was sure of her love after a while, and of mine. Look at me smiling from my furor of near-illness, sweatily and sweetly at her, in the furious fevers of heroism and the wish to please her. The child sits there and looks at her like that.

Now I start to tease her, which is unwise. I turn my face away and hide my head under my arm, my hand: *I don't want another bite, please don't feed me; let me starve, oh, oh, oh.*

This is real.

By that, I mean it isn't *a game*—a game means I won't lose to a really disastrous degree—but then it does become a game; that is to say, I don't believe in defeat as serious at the moment: I have lived all morning in the wilderness and I am still alive—and I glance at her, not wildly but with a wild intonation of the eyes: *I know what love is.*

Old Fatty there, she knows a lot herself. *"Liebchen—essen—mein guter Ritter." Ritter*—knight—cavalier—Galahad—Don Quixote—Don Juan (a joke). The crooning woman, the siren, this good woman leads me now, she wants courage and she wants me to be quiet both, my heroism is a settled matter: it is a ruse on her part—a bluff—a trick—in part. . . .

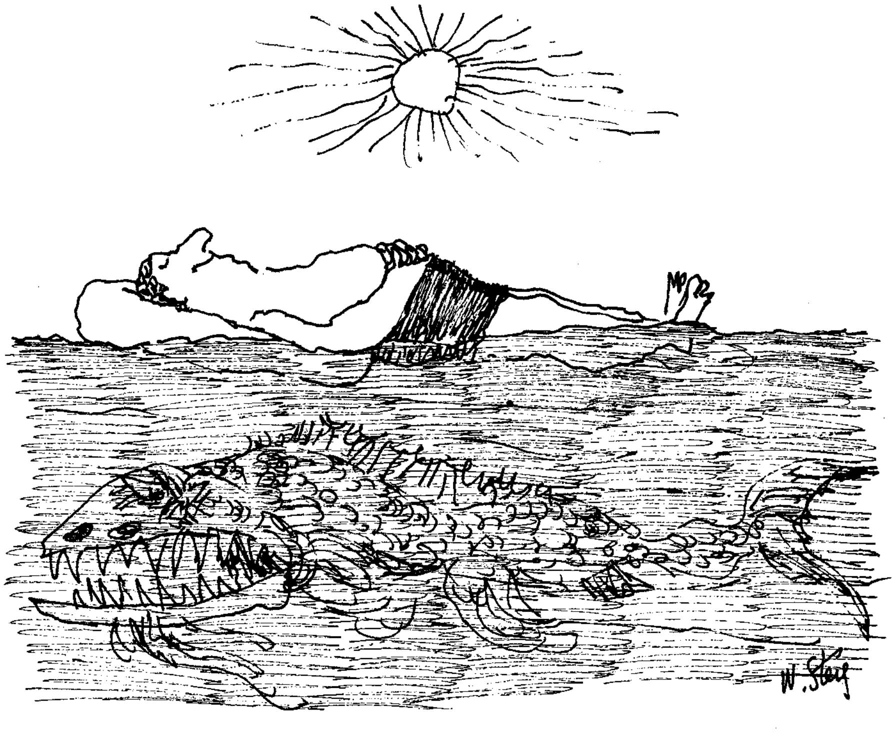
In a state of love and respect I allow myself to be fooled and guided, I trust her to direct my destiny, my wishes; it was love, it was faith, I will escape later—and, besides, what she's asking me to do, to calm down and take another swallow, is too soon after the first swallow; she hasn't yet learned to allow me several minutes between swallows. Lila said, "It took a year out of my life to feed you just once. Annemarie was a saint, a saint, she was smart as a whip and she had the mind of a snake with you and the patience of a saint—" She must learn to sing and tell stories while time applies a sort of anesthesia of calming seconds to my aroused and unhappy system. I gag and twist half off my chair just looking at the spoon of food she waves—and tears spurt from my eyes and my hand waves idly in the air as I throw up now—but not surrenderingly, not weakly—I am fighting it, as she wants; she says, "*Nein, non,* sto-ihhppp itt—*kleine*—No, no . . ."

I am wrestling, I am straining, in my throat—with my lips—with my eyelids and my hands—oh, horrible suffocation—oh, blackness and blankness—and the rest of it.

"I vill moppp opppp—now yo-uuu, Ihh vunttt youuu—to eeeeet—*essen*—*Ritter, Liebchen*—I vuhunntttt yuhuuu beckkk in dee pihnnkkk—" (in the pink: S.L.'s phraseology).

She leans over and she strokes my hair and my ears while, thin-legged, I bustle and wrestle in my struggle. Her touch distresses me, excites me. She sees it, she is very shrewd. She stops, she goes into watchful stasis—like a statue of a goddess or of the Virgin *waiting* in its cloud of implied mercy, so to speak. She sits, she settles back and doesn't look at me—she makes an atmosphere of stillness, of calm—love and mercy: not a joke.

Her arms are like cushions covered in light, heat, pallid sunflowers of



Complete Peace

• •

glary highlights—my eyes buzz at her, her arms, her face, her face is a giant and fat pallid sunflower. Annemarie's attachment-to-me makes Annemarie flourish and smile, maybe sadly (especially if my mother and father are there taking precedence as the ones who supply the money, taking precedence over her mind and her will and her rule and her knowledge of things). She is often *melancholy* and intent—she is often indirect: this indirection takes the place of being gentle in her soul, which she is not; she is fierce.

Love is hard on fat people, Momma has said; *she won't leave that child alone, she won't let up; I'll have to find her some friends, or Wiley will end up more dead than alive, more choirboy than Huckleberry Finn, and more Lutheran than the Pope, ha-ha, we'll take the spirit for the deed, do you take my meaning*? Momma goes soaring into her local, hooty, small-town, Middle Western Englishness. *Well, it's just a figure of speech; I know how to talk.* Momma competes with everyone. So did Annemarie.

It was never clear to me that it was not serious; they each had to come first in the whole world, or they would avoid me. Annemarie's holding out another spoonful of poisonous applesauce. She has brought out some processed cheese and a dry cracker that she crumbled on a plate with a little honey on it, and she's brought out some more cottage cheese, but my reactions were all violent, and I did—nobly, nobly, nobly—struggle to control them. The applesauce, that poisonous stuff, is the most possible nourishment. Annemarie has to make notes of how much I eat, and if I don't eat enough I am taken to the hospital in St. Louis for sedation and feeding.

She is muttering in a certain kind of woman-salesman way about how right she is as an oracle and nurse, about how right she is about how I am to be tended; I'm a *gutes Kind*—she is right, I am to trust her, she is like God giving evidence about Himself in *the Bible*—the hero-*Ritter* must be hungry, I should eat. She ascribes to me and my voyage a high character: its character was "—uhnt he—didtt notTT wuhhhetttte him—selllllfuHf—" Toilet disciplines mark the hero.

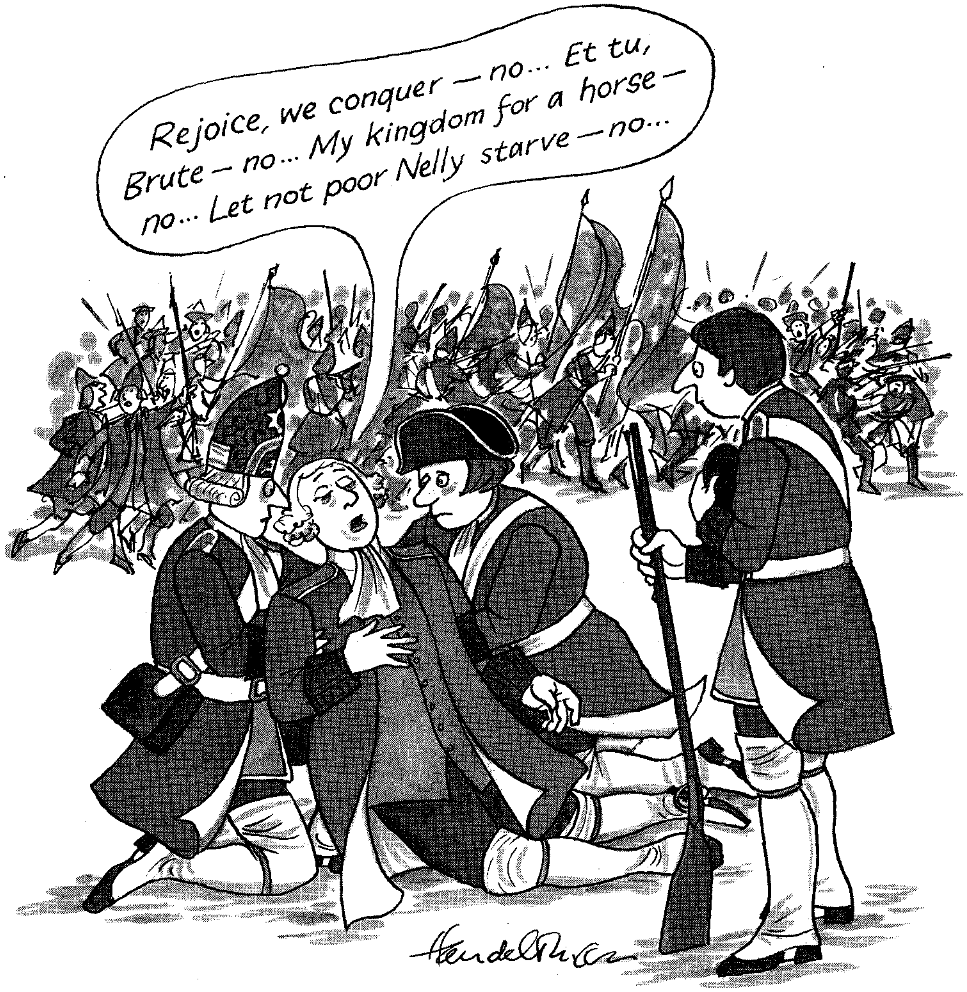
I believe her, on the whole, sometimes with an entirety that is both an ecstasy and a source of nervous panic. I am racked by a spasm of nausea and a spasm of love willfully applied, lured out of me, really, and by a spasm of knowledge of the world—i.e., taking care of me and how that will benefit her. I move and raise my hands to her hand and move the spoon slowly toward myself. I eye her. Her eyes get very large. I have never instructed her before, except with weak or vague cries or wriggles of unclear significance; but this is conscious and controlled; it is like talking to her.

She begins to murmur statements about my nature. I am a flower, a soldier, a *good* soldier, a brave *Kind*, *die bes(ter) chee-ild in der Welt;* and, once again, to make sure I understand, she says I am *dry*, *your pants are clean like soap*. But she doesn't say this excitedly or all at once; she is a master-mistress of tact such that it touches my soul—she speaks slowly, as if she were as chary of words as I am of food. Now she is spooning applesauce into my mouth with daring skill and astounding grace—it's not perfect, but it will do. For the moment.

For the moment, she understands my condition—the newness of the world for me, for someone unrooted in any familiarity at all. She is like a mother to me; she is my mother now, at this instant. She sees, she knows—for a while—"Yuhuu isst like(uh) dee hard(t)-*Herz* cut frumm fuhrommm dee brusttt—dee breast—Vuuhhhiiillllleeee—"

I have no real name, I am the best child in the world—the worst eater, heyeh, heyeh (she has an odd laugh), she never saw such a terrible eater, such a good eater, such an *Engel*-angel.

Annemarie often said I was the most normal person in the house; she says it now, gently, as she holds the spoon, as


Rejoice, we conquer — no… Et tu, Brute — no… My kingdom for a horse — no… Let not poor Nelly starve — no…

Mortally Wounded at the Battle of Quebec, General James Wolfe Forgets His Last Words she averts her glance, as she tests my love and faith in her and in what she says and wants. I blink at her and push her hand away, and then I swallow what is in my mouth. This time it is easier to instruct her; will and affection have to have a velocity, have to be rehearsed, and then they go speeding along.

It works, I eat.

In her throat-clearing way (she'd been alone for two hours) she as if sobbed in her throat: this means she's going to sing.

Annemarie's only usual daily surrender to large-scale feeling is vocal; she's *A Good Singer, truly accomplished*. Part of what this means is that one has to watch one's voice around her, because she shrivels and flinches at ill-pitched sounds as she does at non-Christian sentiment. She is forced to fight with others over this. And over other matters of aesthetic honor—*She's a prima donna if ever I saw one*, S.L. says, and so does Lila.

She gets up and she walks to the sink. Sort of humming to herself—it sounds like growling in a way. She walks with various rhythmic intonations of the hips and rump and of her back, elevatedly, proudly, sadly, happily, sort of, like a little girl. Now she skulks at the sink; now she has a swagger to her arms—she's singing a song to herself, in her head, while she is rinsing the spoon to get rid of my, ah, bad stuff on it from a little spitting up I did just now, bits of half-vomit.

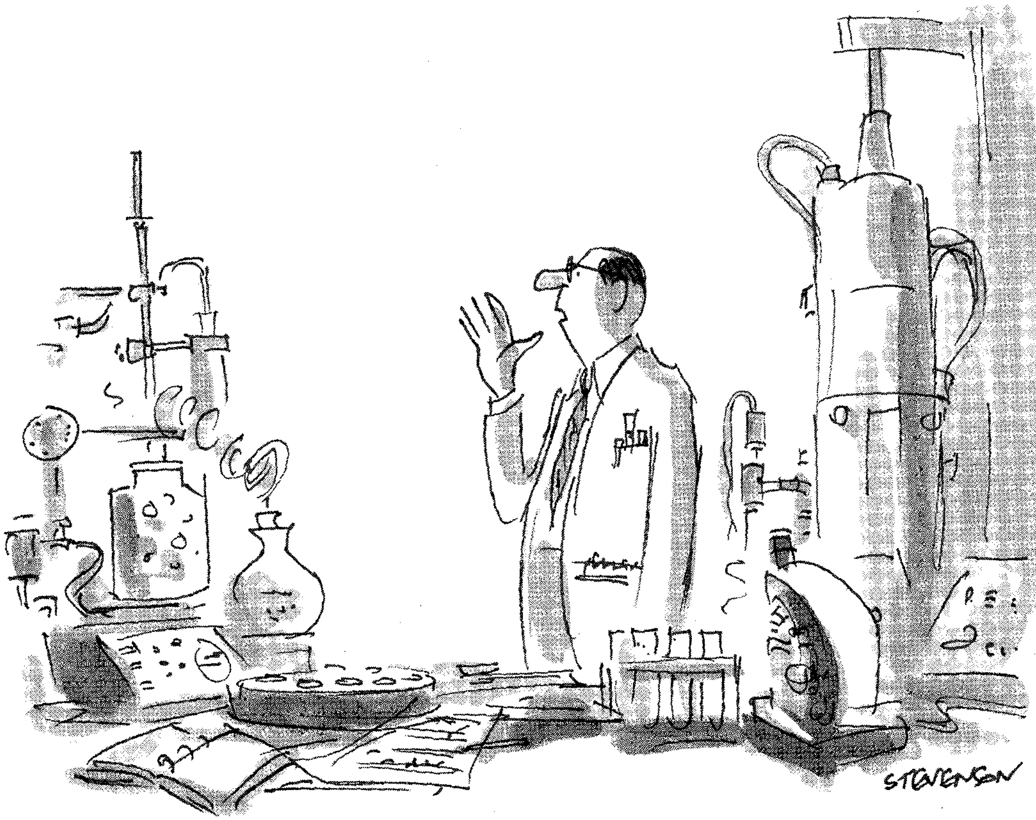
She returns, she is smiling to herself, she purses her lips, she does not look at me. She fills the spoon with applesauce and dips her head and angles it to one side—she is still singing in her head, and she is sad like a singer who's out of practice, a ruined singer. This is nerves and self-pity, it is artistic of her.

She starts to sing out loud, looking at me over her cheeks as she tilts her head, she starts out super-pianissimo and her eyes go out of focus. She is very self-pitying, but self-approval is quite near the surface, I like her self-approval a lot; it makes me laugh out loud with pleasure sometimes, her being conceited pleases me as water does when I'm thirsty.

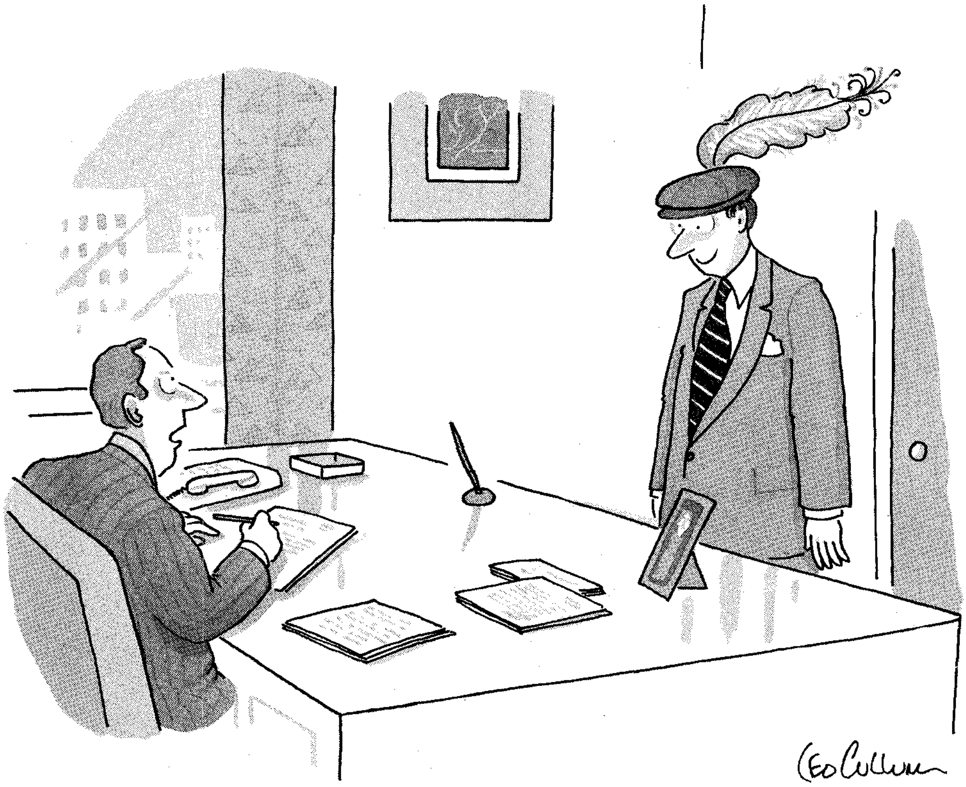
She tests her might-and-power and her sense of key with a couple of louder notes after a little of the pianissimo, then sort of proceeds to do some notes mezza voce, while I let her maneuver the spoon of applesauce into my mouth. I am thrown partway into the air by a muscle spasm, and she sharps an upward-scooting note and sort of pushes it out. Twitch and agony.

She catches my arm, she presses me sturdily down into my chair and partly against her small but pillowy tit—she leans to one side to do this, she rarely is physical except in a very tender, slow, fingertip way, I think chaste but powerfully potent; we touch each other gingerly, usually. Racked with the aftereffect of spasm, I am suffocated in her flesh. Her tit. She is kind, firm, undramatic, and self-involved: she's getting onto the outer rush of the slowly rushing melody, as into a kind of saddle. Melody encourages her to push suddenly into being expressive; but it's too soon, her voice isn't set.

I have tears running down my face from the vomiting spasms, and I have the taste of bile in my mouth, and the spoon with applesauce in it is wavering near. I feel sickness in me, but shallowly, I'm like a silted pond with a queasy bottom and a lot of gripping weeds. I tremble in the noise. I am touched by the sounds and by the other circumstances of the moment, but the sounds lure me, not into but away from maelstroms ("They should call them *femalestroms*," S.L. used to say whenever he could, whenever the word came up—usually on the radio, maybe only there). Listening is good for me. Our privacy, her intentness, these stir my lower body. When Momma hums to me off key, a melody with mistakes in it, "Blow, blow, western wind" with "Greensleeves" mixed in, she says, *"Don't tell anyone I sing; don't tell anyone I sing to you, they'll all laugh at us and you. People know I can't sing, so just watch out going around telling*



"A possible eureka."



"It's quite a feather in your cap, Beavis. What's it for?"

• •

everyone that what you appreciate about me is that I sing pretty songs in a sweet voice to you." She minds not being expert. Annemarie makes a shrill crescendo. A crescendo is a silence stood on end. A yell but much, much, much more willful.

Focussed. She straightens out the sound until it is more music than hysteria. Annemarie is a high alto. I can smell the cinnamon on the applesauce, I can smell it through the rain of sounds. She is at the point of singing more seriously, of attempting to. This music is in celebration of me and my heroisms today. It is for me but it's for God, too, and the world, which is God's, in her view; and of course a lot of it, really a lot of it, is for herself.

She is singing. I scrunch down and squint. I have a headache, and my backside and chest and arms and legs are bruised; and my mouth and throat and stomach are sore and fouled somewhat. But Annemarie's music is concerned with having been sad and then having had a triumph, a triumph in the world of fact, I think; I think the song refers back to that: it's not happening now in the song. I don't like the sad parts; I like only the soft, happy parts; the triumph parts are too high and loud; and then I want to scream and howl like her. If I did, I would be an accompanying and enragingly inept echo. . . .

She eyes me at the edges of her vision: she is never unaware of me; she is indirect or somewhat distant but she never goes entirely away, as Momma does. She knows I prefer lullabies to arias and hymns but she often ignores that because it makes her sad—maybe it bores her. Anyway, in states of the profoundest nervousness, sometimes even when deep in panic, in justified panic, I can become dignified when I hear in music the evidence that it is kindly meant.

It's like that now. It's as if Annemarie's fat arms are now partly a habitation of sounds while her warm-up music—the first hymn—clatters around in forecourts of anticipated dreaminess or nervousness in me. A push of tense energy in her voice makes me jump sideways in my chair, but she pushes me down, she holds me in the chair while she brings the spoonful of applesauce near me; and she considers pausing to say something but she shakes her head; her eyes are uplifted oddly, she only glances at me from up there; and she sings, she sort of sings, she sings on; and I take a tiny, really tiny, bit of the applesauce; and I shudder and get nauseated only to a little extent.

I am in her protection and I hear about the God who protects her; I am a hero, not a bad child; at any rate, I am not a stubborn one—she means something like that in the way she looks at me. I am vomit-stained and teary-eyed, and salt tears, some of it is from the sweats of nausea, sting my eyes and bring rainbows to my lashes.

I remember how her arms felt, the fat messages of being in them. I am instructed by this woman at this moment in the somewhat tough tenderness available in *sounds*, in what is, after all, excited and exalted speech, somewhat grotesque, and perhaps unnecessary; but necessary for me. Her nearness, the pressures of the smells and perspectiveless reality of her fuzzed, ample self near my eyes blur out the pretty-much sotto-voce singing for a minute. She is feeding me the applesauce again; laboringly, cautiously, I take another truly small bit—but she smiles as if it were a good helping. I remain immobile for a moment, merely holding the food, testing the ground—I have been told Annemarie is not pretty but, of course, she is amazingly beautiful: like her voice. I pass through various planes of attention as she sings louder now—I do it to cover whatever spasms ensue when I swallow. She is urging me on to drama—go ahead, Pisher—that's not her vocabulary, that's her mood, she got it from Lila. Her voice, her soul are cresting and are in motion, a different species of chamois among screech-peaks and chest notes. And she has backed away from me on her chair and she gestures in the air with the spoon: fat woman on a green kitchen chair by electric light at noon.

Little bits of applesauce fly off the spoon. Her hymn, its intervals, its darkness fly off her mouth—the singing deforms her throat, her lips. Here's her tongue being odd and sickening in her open mouth in sickening, fast tremors—she is seen from the accidental angle of me sitting here while she musically dings and buh-dums along. The soft fuzzed movement of her cheek is insanely real and persistent in its trembling, in what are actual, resonant patterns of the noise. She sings carefully—she would never shout in my ear. She's steady in a lot of ways. She's steady out there in the uncertain world and its erratic veerings. It's real.

"DUHOOO GOOOODDTTT—blah, blah—devil bad (t)—" or something. Maybe it's a local hymn, this one.

S.L. says she is "a fiend about goodness." He says she is "a punisher." She is teaching me to be *good* (*Das ist richtig*) and to not be *bad;* badness has categories starting with toilet stuff and naughtiness and then mounting to hauteur and ill grace, and other manifestations of pride toward good people; then came THE TERRIBLE, THE I CAN'T EVEN TALK ABOUT IT (in a heavy accent: I don't really mean this as a joke; I mean it was a strain for her to talk about anything that wasn't easy or a cliché). And beyond that lay treachery and those follies that are the same to her as treachery. And so on.

Lila says, "A lot of women won't think about what's good and what's bad, but Annemarie and I are alike in that, we're like one person there."

Spiritual honor involves service and cleanliness; Annemarie and I are a community of "ordinary" righteousness. I like this very much. And I believe in it and its goodness.

Momma will separate us on the grounds of "It's now or never, they'll never get away from each other if I don't do something soon—I don't want him to be a little *goy*—if he lives, he looks strong but you never can tell —and it's not good for her—"

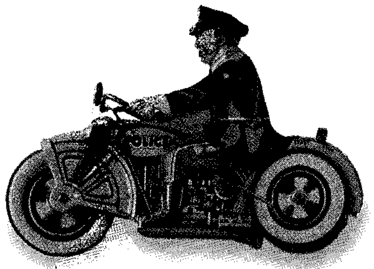
And so on.

Annemarie pauses and says, "—*ein kleiner Kussel für einen kleinen Engel*—"

Her short kiss is a burning moth on the top of my head. Then she exercises her throat with large breaths for more than a minute. She has a certain look of sarcasm which has to do with the throat—perhaps with Lutheran American choir singers and choirmasters, who do not understand good vocal production. Who do not perhaps understand God, either.

America is full of prophets—Annemarie is homesick for Alsace on Sundays. Everyone says she is somewhat crazy. I breathe sweetly—comically—at her, alongside her. She is awesomely present. I feel a kind of pale wind coming from the arcs of attention of her face. Of her eyes.

She sings a line and looks off into the air. And she breathes some more; she listens to how she sounded a second



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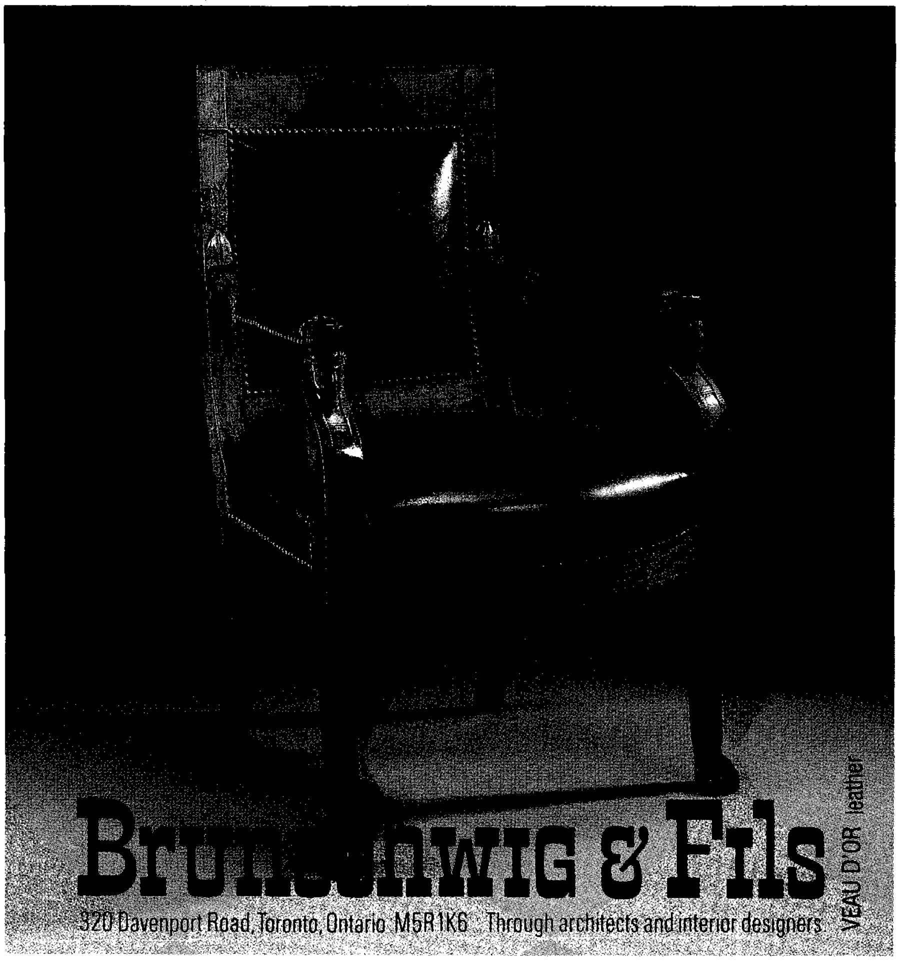

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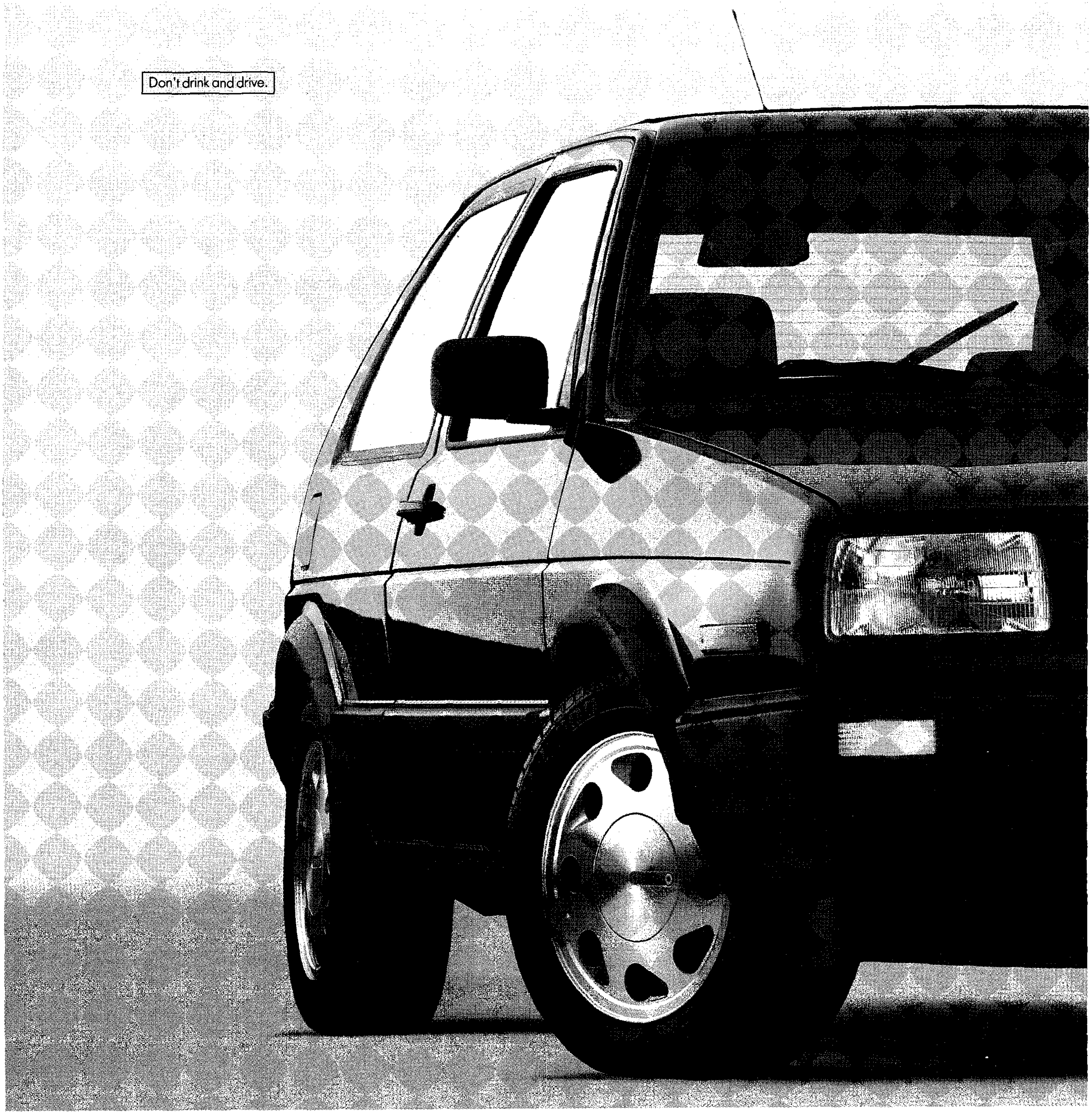

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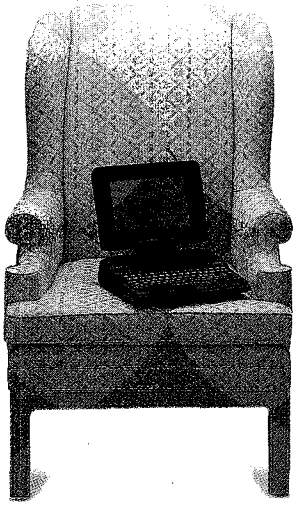

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ago. "*Nein, non, no*—" Which I sometimes heard as "I don't know": mostly I heard with considerable acuity but without knowing what to do with what I heard. She is rational in spite of being crazy.

She tries the note again, and stops and breathes. "*Ja*, yes, *oui*," she says.

I see her give up on her throat—she is satisfied with her throat for the moment. We look at each other on two slants and with an overlap of haphazard directness—as I said earlier, we cannot look at each other easily. Right now, she begins to bark with German laughter. She averts herself—face and torso. She bends over slightly. Usually, her odd laughter is decent, sociable in volume—a mere uncontrollable, eccentric bubble beneath a controlled surface. Now it erupts and is crazy for a moment—*American*.

She is an awful—gigantic, gaping, yawning—*chaos* of *amusement*, she is a hurtling and burning body—a bonfire, an asteroid pausing—of a marvellous amusement of an anarchic kind, a beauty: she is about to become very grave—but first she is hauled, gaspingly, into American laughter, into girlish uproar. Because she laughed a moment ago—at my dwarfishness, in part, my vomiting, and so on—I cannot manage the beauty of the meaning involved, her confidence that I will live, her self-praise and faith, her mockery, her boredom . . .

She gets hold of herself in a steady, duty-ridden way, but then when she is almost in control of herself she makes the last self-bridling a sudden thing. She says to me then, "With liberty and justice for all—eh? *Issstt wahr, lieber Vuhiiiileee*?" She means the laughing is part of an American holiday. She is sincere and she is mocking and she is gigantic—all three.

Annemarie's drunk with playfulness, and that shades into concern about her voice, even a paranoia about how people look at her singing, how *Americans* regard her all in all. But she would feel unhappy about how *Parisians* regard her, too. She's moved from laughter, short-lived, abrupt, to a paranoid bravado toward the thing that people think she's fat and different-looking—she's bounding around in emotional ways inside herself. Her unrecognized mightiness, her greatness, her status in the world move her now to interrupt her humming, her partly singing, to say, "People laugh at me, don't you laugh at me." She does not mind it that we laughed, but she doesn't approve of it, either, anymore.

I don't understand and so I try another small laugh, silent—but happy-eyed.

This heavy German woman in America, she turns away from my laugh—my guess is she's heartbroken, elaborately so—her *happiness* hurts her now; she is hurt; perhaps she always was dissatisfied, as Momma later said.

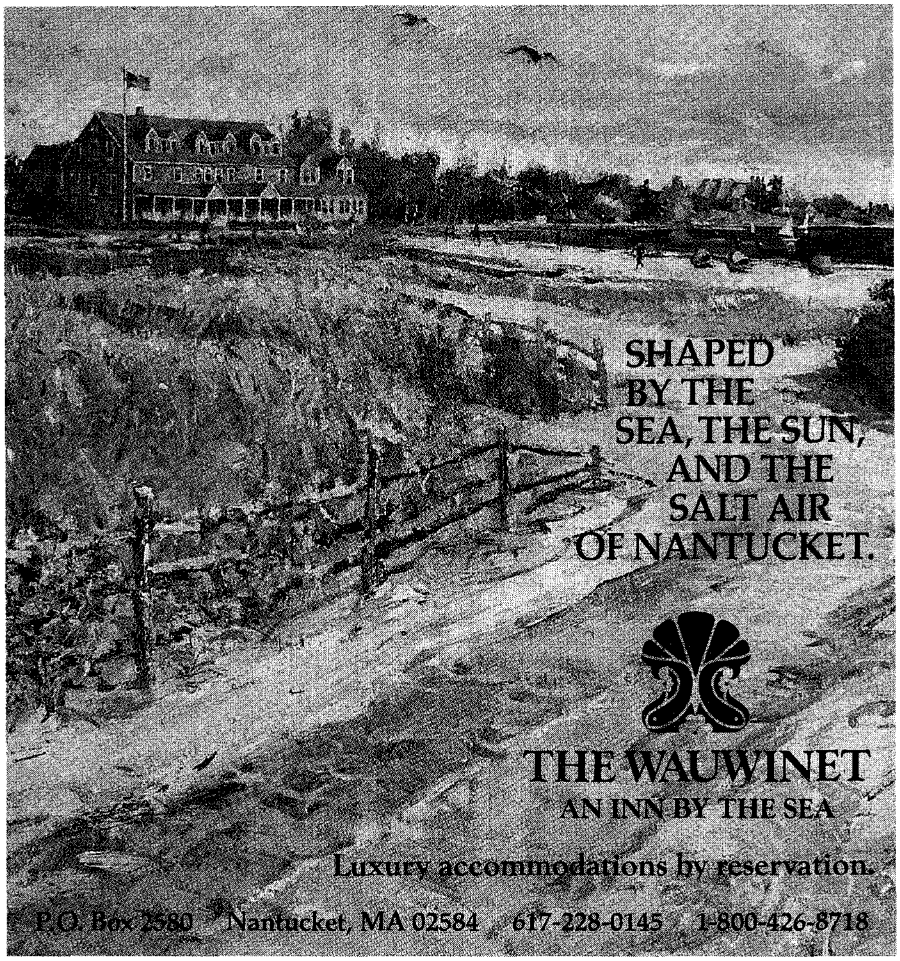
She attempts a phrase—a musical one. It (vaguely) disappoints her. She pauses, sighs, is sad and indignant—she listens to herself a couple of times now, she goes back in her head and listens, she sighs and then she sighs again: this queenly sadness—this dissatisfaction with laughter and herself and one thing and another—is part of what leads her to perform.

She repeats one of the worst notes and she stops and listens—and then she looks at me, and makes a face as if she's going to vomit; it's just a pantomime.

She does one of her better notes, then another, and then a roulade. Her eyes become very finely lit up and yet murky and worried but edged with will and power. Annemarie does not mean to be as individual as she is—it's too painful to have so personal a stake in the world and in one's own fate. The way to God and Heaven is to be in a spiritual army, to be somewhat faceless—she wants that lovely subtraction of the self that money provides. She liked the daylight in that small town; and the night noises of wind and cicadas; maybe the absence of pain, of certain pangs, became something like the thing she liked most, the object of her cultivation of her life, a shepherding of circumstances, a penning-up of tragedies and of bitter or burning moments, a flight from her nerves, from whatever sensitivities she had—she was maybe both coarse and sensitive: "She could kill pigs, she wasn't afraid to use a knife or an axe, she did farm butchery, I swear to you—she didn't have a nerve in her body."

I cling to the feelings I have about her—the more she is attacked, the more I defend her.

She is dimly to be seen in the white enamelled surface of the kitchen cabinets, a limp and wavering grayish reflection that moves in a softened version of what I see more directly, her straightening her shoulders and heav-



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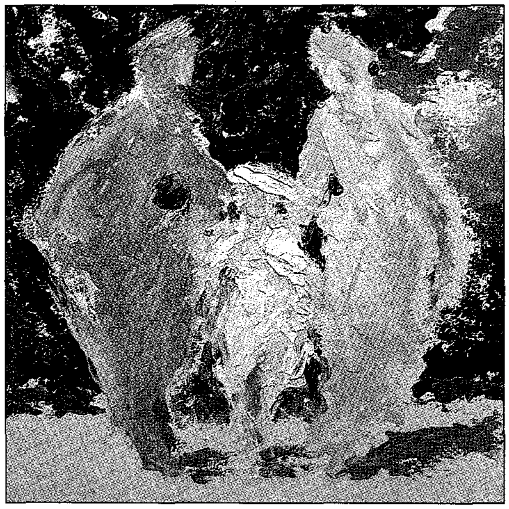

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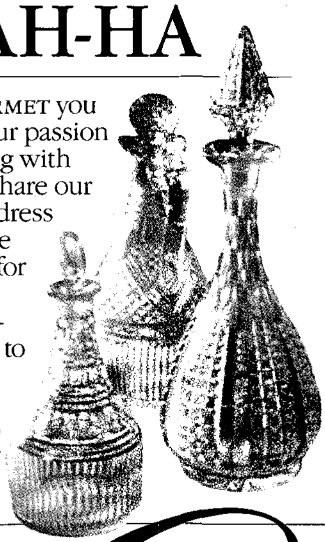

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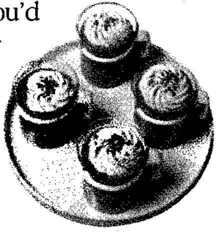

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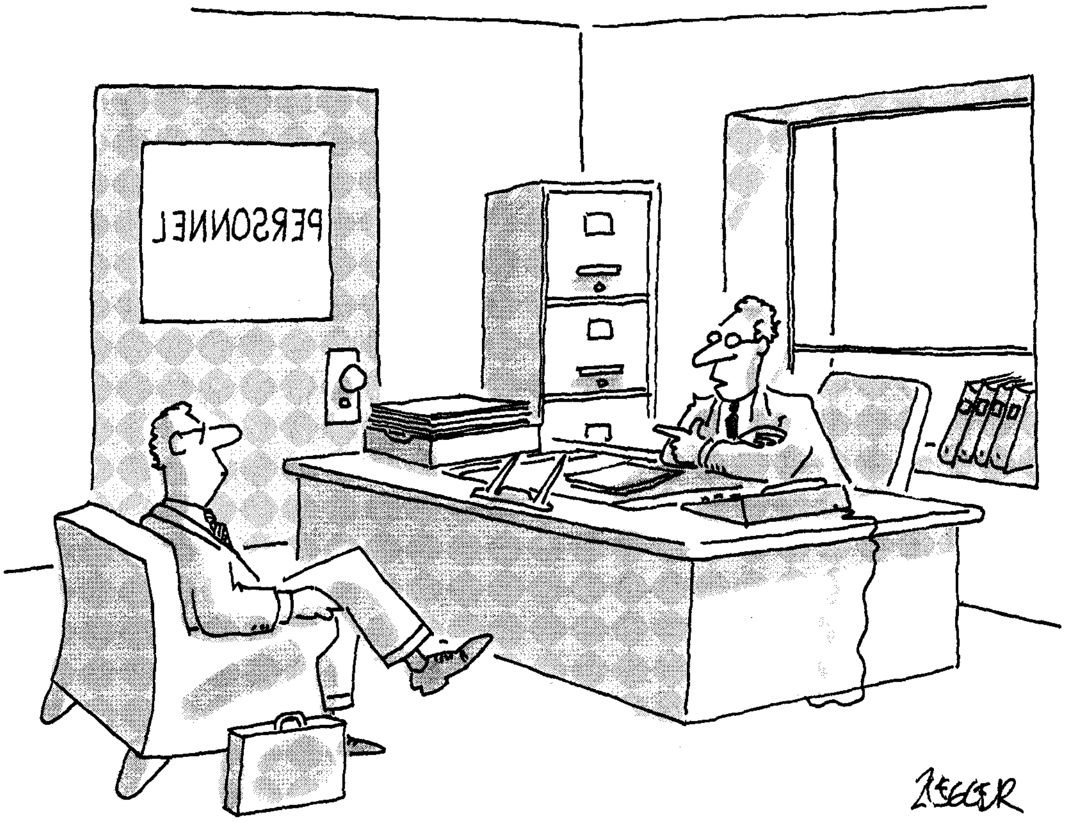
ing her breasts with comic and angelic urgency.

She is going to sing harder, she is going to sing really hard, she means to introduce Serious Beauty into our lives for a few minutes now, I think.

All at once, she's singing a folk song. She has a somewhat determined rhythm, forceful. She walks around a bit and she comes near me and she smooths my hair. Like Carmen, she looks archly here and there around the kitchen while she sings. The rhythmic settledness is a kind of pounding on me—the will in her shakes me, I am small, I prefer her to be passive and somewhat hurt; now she is not hurt; and what she is doing is thunderous and thrilling, it startles me as if lightning and thunder were going off in my face.

She moves back, she moves away from me, from my squinting and lurching face, she starts to walk around the kitchen. Her tongue drums out rolls of timed notes—that rattling drum shakes me. My eyelids bob because of that rhythm. I *rattle*, my eyes squint, stare, *rattle*—she softens and arranges her voice and becomes more flexible and *pretty* in style; and this change is like grass on the lawn in the shade in hot weather, when it's cool and I'm damp and I'm not ticklish, when the grass doesn't tickle me.



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Light is gathered in her hair, perches on her shoulders.

Dexterities—captured, flayed—are hung up like game for dinner, and she passes on to others: a sad but bubbling kind of note goes along in a persistent death agony, a diminuendo—I lean forward, worried, drawn—it is the end coming, it is the end.

I do not control her to any depth at all. She does something at a cabinet and I blink slowly and breathe with a kind of release, and then her voice strengthens and I grow rigid in that pressure—it's another verse or line of verses.

She passes near me where I sit at the table, and she takes my hand and puts it over the spoon and she fixes my hand to the spoon while she sings.

I hold the spoon. She won't look at me but she knows. I mean she is watching anyway. And some secondary range of her voice is affected by a sense of me and my love, *mine*—a child's, but it has a special quality, it is a specific love.

She carols and chirps, in a soft voice, at that child in the chair with a spoon in his hand as if he were a German child, as if he were God knows what. Her voice is soft enough for me now—one of the odd things about being musical is the tact that's involved: music isn't used for private thought much, if at all; it's known that it has to have a listener. I believe she bid the child to consider a billy goat; that's what I believe the song was about.

The billy goat would eat anything.

It is this woman's judgment that I be saved, that I should live.

She pauses and straightens her skirt. The boy is an oscillant point of nervous life in the room. He is as fragile as glass—*You're a poor cracked glass vase full of roses coming apart* (Dad's odd, maybe senseless poetry)—*He's like a street of lights, like Broadway*: Daddy said that; then, regretting the vulgarity, he said, *in a farm town around here, in the flat country*—seen from the dark, from a darkened road, across fields, the consoling and enticing lights of a town.

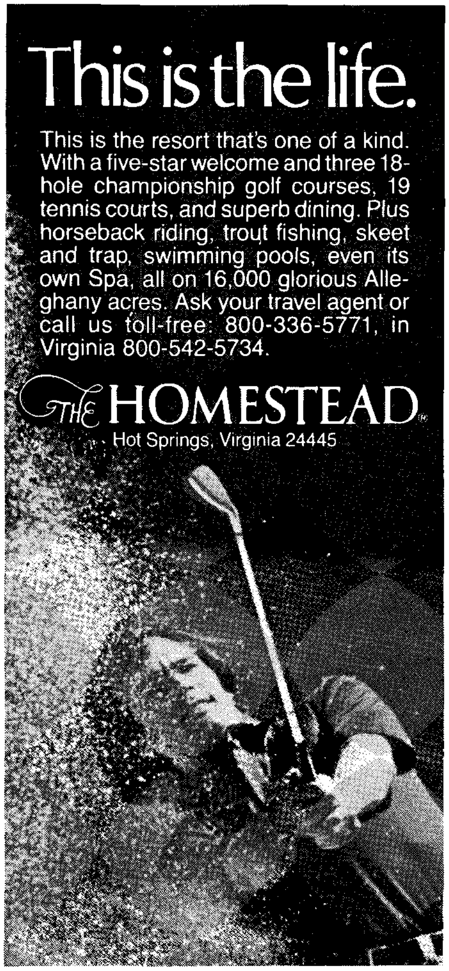
Annemarie says, "*Du bist ein* (?) like (?) *Licht*—he *ist eine* floooor (flower?) wit' *Augen*, eyes—"

She didn't quite finish that song. She uttered something explanatory to do with her song. Have I said that it was raining hard, off and on?

(Lila said once, "With looks like that he can attract the care he needs—*I* don't have to stay home all the time . . . I can trust most people with him: he's so pretty and so *pathetic* . . .")

Annemarie sings a note and then tells me I "*musst* usen *ddynuh* sp-ooo-oooon—"

She is arch, stolid, firm, pious—I move the spoon toward my mouth, I look at the cold taste of silver and at the writhy bits of worms of mushed apple in the back of my throat, I look at nausea and spasms, and so on, and put the spoon to my lips. Annemarie strikes off a note, a clear, sweet note—she strikes off an absurdly clear and strange succession of the notes of an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opening of a lullaby, so that I am sick on food and I gag, and I am gay and peaceful with listening, and I am flattered, and I am nakedly without connection to an inner life—all at the same time. I echo and ring, groggily, as marble does, while Annemarie tinkles out more notes. She points to my limp hand that has the spoon in it. Slowly I stiffen my hand, my wrist, I raise the spoon and take the poisonous stuff somewhat into my mouth; I suck at the applesauce at the edge of its little puddle in the spoon I hold.

"Ah" (or "*Ach*"), she sings, she interpolates: "*Mehr* more—*mehr* more—" Annemarie stands; she goes fop-pop-plumply poppolooting around the kitchen, as much in a strut as she can go with her pride and gravity, while I hold nearly a spoonful of applesauce at the top of my doubtful but not yet wildly upset throat.

Her attention is on her singing, *too.*

The fast part of the lullaby slows down.

I am sick in anticipation, sick with fright—no: I'm not. She breaks off at a bad note. She says, "*Essen*—eeeeeetttttt (uh), *Liebchen,* swoewlllohhhhh—"

The "ohhhhh" is a pretty sound.

I start to swallow and she covers the drama with the notes of a hymn of gratitude about a harvest and about a war. Her voice is crazed, quick, dexterous, and—I think—flat as well as corny and obvious.

And then, not.

She's eying me around and over her round, white, mealy cheeks—singer's cheeks, though: strong and wobbly both. A kind of wind of faith arises in her voice, a blind improvisation of faith, of giving herself over to her singing. I hold my spoon and have a throatful of applesauce and I can't quite manage to get my eyelids up in the storm wind of faith and sound and general difficulties and commonplaces of my consciousness and the moment; I sort of aspire along with her but not really. The music is hanging and climbing and festooning itself all over my nose, my eyelids. She is blurrily triumphant. The clever, proud voice is proof of reason, the grounds of her Right to believe God likes her (in particular)—this is part of the *sweeter* vibration of the tune now.

The immediate manners of objects toward Annemarie (she now has a restlessly squirting sponge and is wiping things) and the what-God's-given-her-to-know—that is to say, a large part of the flooring and *superstructure* of my mind; her cleverness, her temper, her music—now combine in her voice, in her tone. She has no child except me, by virgin birth: she will leave me, too (Lila said, *I'm the one who stayed awhile, didn't you know?*). . . . It is possible that although she left me, she loved me.

Annemarie is warmed up, she is hot and singing—but in a smallish voice and constricted style, although much, much freer than when she began.

She is singing and I spy on us; other people's judgments and jealousies, their requirements do not perhaps distort us just now—still, I feel, large mysteries attend her mind as she sings—Christian mysteries? Maybe. What Dad called *the sweet mystery of life?* Maybe that, too. The world depends on her no matter what is wrong with her. I took Annemarie's fat arm and her feelings about me to be the arm of the Lord—later merely the arm of Good Fortune: Good Accident.

Annemarie's enormous-to-me bosoms flex fleshily. My legs and belly are limp, semi-bruised, and warmed. All our stories stop, I want them to stop, I am near her, I am near her sugar-in-gunnysacks large-to-me breasts: they float, hang, push near my eyes, quarter-seen, heavily sensed, insecurely placed in the air, never geometrically to be comprehended, white, slobby to me, small to Lila, whose breasts were famous. Annemarie's fat-church and *trapeze and crucifix* arm adjusts her breasts—she is looking at me fairly hard, she is eying me operatically. Somebody loves me. *Somebody loves me.*

That woman has a rapidly beating heart, she is amateur but a genius in the lit phosphorus of white air. I am swimming in the world—a poet said that about a church once—a rope, a chain, has lowered hope and this architectural display to us from Heaven.

Make up your mind, make up your mind to get well, and you will get well and have the whole world to play with. . . . Well, to play in—at least that . . .

The noise in the theatre of my consciousness includes that of the rain thickly slapping the windows and walls, the sides of the house and down the hall, outside the open front door. I

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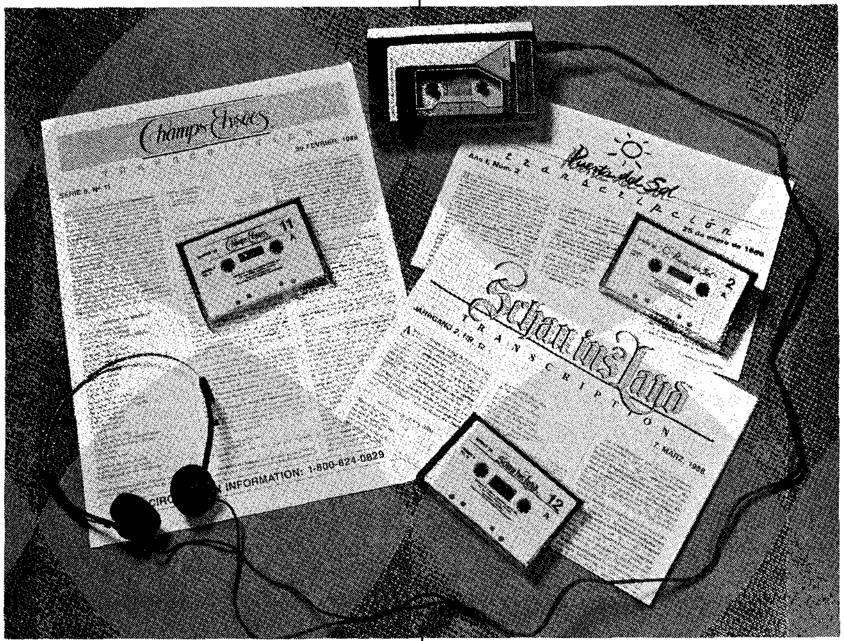

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will not speak; speech will make me scream. The gray shuddering jaws and noses of the rain move and slip along the windows. She sings. She clumsily feels her way along paths of self-absorption and knowledge of music and notes. The sounded note—she has incipient flusters and half-made near-outbursts of release and expulsion, a hurling of bright sound which she holds back while I, still gaudy-mouthed, stare at her, a spoon in my hand. I am swimming in her music and in her charity in the world.

Her noises are arcs, bright shoelaces, continuous bands of architectural praise, a folktale marvel but verging on a broad joy in God and Christ. Her attempts to breathe, I notice those. I giggle some. She closes her eyes. I am promptly solemn and blinking. Some of that is with discomfort: her notes are so high, so high and large, the kitchen cabinets vibrate. A melody sung in that range and that loudly (not really very loudly) has a rattling edge, it is cutting and broken at its boundaries.

Now the notes begin to yammer. She is tired of charity—her singing is crudely frail now but getting stronger, and it is passing out of my hearing; she wants A GLORIOUS CHARITY. Glory beckons her—she is a shy, red-faced woman, a girl. Around the enlarged D-sharp the kitchen babbles. Part of the color of the music is that it is real music now, a glare and shadow of meaning; and, this one time, I can tell it's good—I hear something, I hear part of the music. . . . She moves the engines of music down to inside her chest, behind her gunnysack breasts; they take up throbbing residence there. This is full song and one can see the extent to which she's not much good. One sees the pain in her when she knows she's not much good. She squints and looks taut.

Now she opens big, soft doors in herself. I am crouched, closed-mouthed, in my chair, and the gaudiness that burns in me, in my eye sockets and my mouth, is a kind of hysteria and cruel knowledge about watching her and is only partly a complicity and love; her attempt at art separates us as usual.

She sweats. Her face is damp. Annemarie!

She pushes with her stomach, she flexes hiddenly inside her mouth and throat, this time she stares at me. She hopes my appearance will inspire her.

Then without warning come some legato phrases, in a slippery key, that seem to be full of love and that give her satisfaction abruptly. They startle her. She's sweaty, she has a mad but sane look. I traverse—with impermanent nausea—the memory of applesauce, its strings and uneven surfaces, its smells.

She's getting better: she's walking around the kitchen in a terrific way; her eyes start to shine more and more, now one, now the other (as I see them one by one), in her song-distorted, song-shaken face. I like her singing. I especially like it just now. She is poised in a kind of pleasure on the humped, light-struck windowsills of her song. I hear an accompanying insect buzz of her breath and I hear her rustling clothes. Heroically singing in reverse, taking in her notes, I listen to her. She eyes me. Her lips are too busy to grin. She hasn't been off pitch for several bars now.

Tenderness and self-consciousness of a kind swell the amplitudes of my nurse. The partly ill, still unspeaking child doesn't laugh at the maybe mad, maybe merciless fat woman; immodesty in her maybe does turn her over to Deity or to being possessed. She is in the realm of Holy Fools, naked-voiced, shameless. Shamelessness in her is a marvel, after all, and represents a miracle of faith as well as exhibitionism. The fat woman's noise is, in one way, a grace displayed, bell-like and sweaty. Her voice peals along. She labors. It is a luminous silliness. Then she shakes her head no.

I lift my spoon—I stare at her very madly, truly lunatic now; I am inexpressibly maddened, inexpressibly placated by the various blades and whistles of this woman's choral bellowing. It chops at our loneliness, hers and mine, our solitude on the earth, it is all over me on my outside and all over my inside, the bellowing is. It washes over and accompanies a leftover taste of semi-vomitous bile in my throat. Some people have real musicians for parents —imagine the lacework of sounds in their heads.

This woman sings exclamations prettily: *God in Heaven, oh, my God, hear Thou me,* address and exclamation, adoration, real feeling—I duck my head, an American amateur.

Is it true a soul can be amateur?

Annemarie's flawed performance fills me up inside and outwardly cups me, cups my oscillating skull and face and all its openings in a blur of white-faced, warm calf-butting music. It hunts me down; I hate it, no, I like it; I love it I guess. I put my spoon on the table; I listen with my whole head, which blinks, even its bony part. I blink in the pulsating air. The notes, some of which are glued and some of which are runny, are rhythmic with a flustering emphasis. If I really listen, if I return nakedly to the memory of the actual song, a not-to-be-tested understanding comes to me, is in me; and that is so even though my wits are distorted and euphoric among the glottal rumbles and roars and semi-shrieks. She is conceited and sly, holy and ordinary, a mad cow and gull and machine of noise.

Here come more notes. The best ones go skipping and they tug at me. The etiquettes and corruptions of a woman singing touch inconceivable surfaces in me. I owe her this, too: she was an artist, close to being a good one, after all, at moments.

I am clasped in this music. The touch of her hand is now less powerful than the clasp of her voice. Her voice clasps my promontory head, my causeway neck, my peninsular and shaking arms. I am coated with a glare of audible meanings; it pleases and frightens me; I open my mouth and shut my eyes. The silver blast of one note becomes the platinum tide of a following note, and then that becomes the rapid white pulsations of a cadenza. Oh, my God, her song-flexed self so maddens me I throw myself from my chair and lie flat on the floor to show that I am dead, or willing to nap with appreciation.

I stare upward to show that I can't maintain my humanity in the hurricane of music but must be grass, a bird, the earth. She knows. She walks around me, she sings. I hear the rain, a tinny and drumming wobble around the diminished alto of Annemarie's tiring notes. I lie on the floor and I see her massive legs.

S.L. said about her, "She was crazy all in all but she was a good-hearted woman. She never did anything bad that I know of but argue with me and save your life."

If you allow for the music of what he said, that's not such an exaggeration, it seems to me. —HAROLD BRODKEY

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CELEBRATION

WE were driving through East Harlem, heading for a ballgame. "Where does 'bullpen' come from?" my companion said. "I heard Ralph Kiner talking about it the other night, and he said it was from those Bull Durham tobacco billboards on the outfield fences, back in the old days. The pitchers warmed up out there, so the name carried over. That sounds logical, but it's almost too neat, don't you think? Now I suppose it's all going to get mixed up with this movie 'Bull Durham.' But it would be good to know. And where does 'home plate' come from? That's a better question. I keep coming back to it, because it says so much about baseball and about other things. About ourselves. Home—'Safe at home,' 'Home is the sailor, home from sea,' and the rest of it. I make a lot of that *nostos*. But who gave it the name 'home' in baseball? It's never called 'fourth base,' you know. It must go way back to the beginnings of the game."

The light changed, and we crossed Second Avenue and swung up onto the Triborough ramp. We were on our way to Shea, and the Mets against the Reds.

"Well, there's 'Home' in Parcheesi, isn't there?" I said, digging out change for the toll. "Isn't it printed out there in the middle of the board, in that funny lettering? That's an old game, too."

"I guess so," he said.

"And what about that eighteenth-century nursery quatrain they keep reprinting in all the baseball anthologies?" I said. "You know—'The ball once struck, off speeds the boy' . . . something, something . . . 'then home with joy'?"

"Yes, I know it," he said. "That must have been about rounders, or some other children's game. So the usage was there before there was any baseball. Sometimes I think baseball was invented just to remind us of things. It's a living memory, and it has an epic quality—you can't get away from it. Think of the man at the plate and what he wants to do up there—travel that long way around, and all just to get back where he started from, back home. He's a pioneer. He has to wander and explore, but it's dangerous out there, and he remembers the other need as well—the need to get back home. You can die at second base."

"Base runners die at third, too," I said. "Look at the Yankees lately."

"Yes, but mostly you die at second, don't you?" he went on. "I don't know why, except that it's the farthest place from home. And if you forget the home place you're lost."

"You're out," I said.

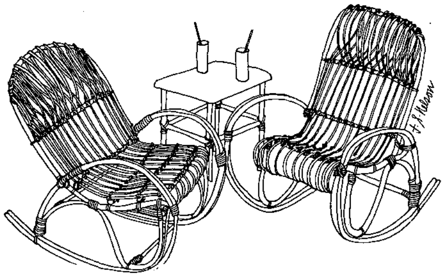
"You've got it," he said. We laughed.

"But then you have to do it again and again, and then again, no matter how hard it is," he said, not quite as an afterthought. "It's the eternal return. It's that repetition and impediment that are so much a part of the game and the legend."

"Even talking about it, it's O.K. to repeat ourselves," I said.

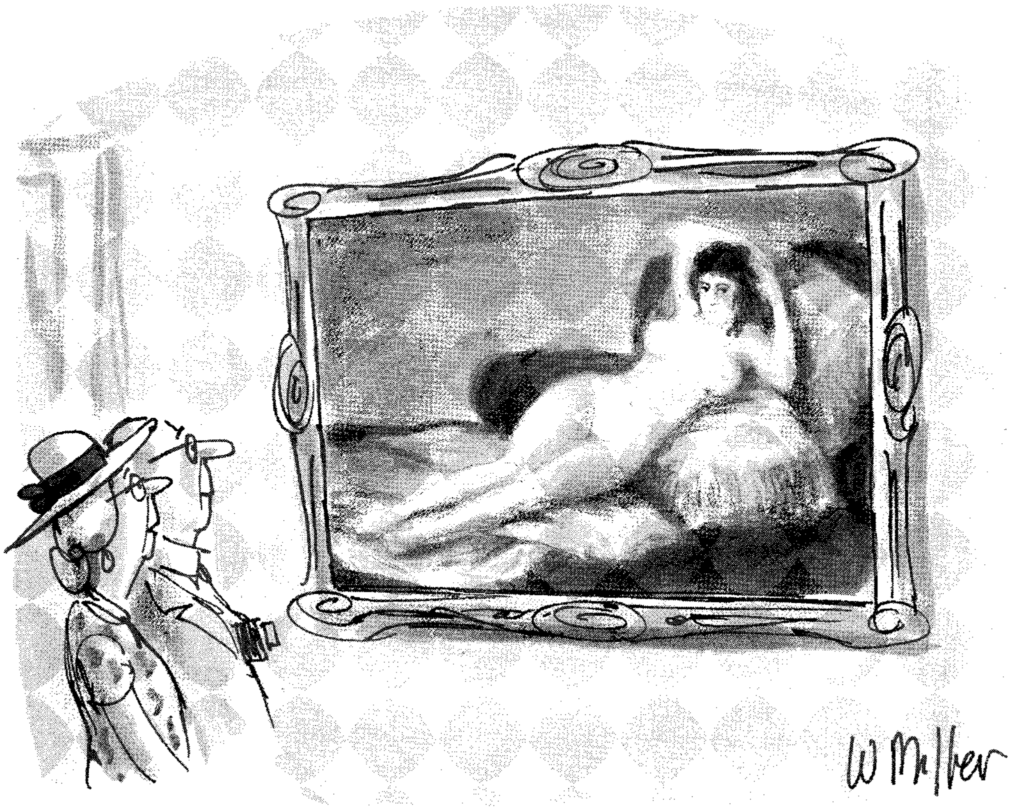
"Absolutely," he said with satisfaction. "We participate in the ethic by talking about it while it's in progress. It's a celebration."

For me, the ideal seatmate at a game should verge upon the taciturn, reserving comments or curses (or screamings, of course) for the serious business at hand, but I am prepared to make exceptions. The gent sitting to my right in the front seat of my Shea-ward Volvo on this steamy evening early in July looked stubbornly ill-prepared for our outing, in his buttoned-up shirt, striped tie, and rumpled navy blazer. He was solid and shaggy, with a noble beard, a seafaring complexion, a Homeric brow, a lidded but burning outbound-inbound gaze, a rumbling laugh, and a smile by turns gentle and razory. As exceptions are measured, he belonged on Mt. Rushmore: A. Bartlett Giamatti, president of the National League, who came to the post two years ago fresh from an eight-year term as president of Yale. A scholar in Renaissance literature, he had served twenty previous years on the Yale faculty, in the Department of English and Comparative Literature, picking up a burry assortment of honors and memberships and titles along the way (John Hay Whitney Professor of English and Comparative Literature, director of the Division of Humanities, Guggenheim Fellow, Woodrow Wilson Fellow, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, member of the American Philosophical Society, the Dante Society, etc., etc.), and writing such books as "The Earthly Paradise and the Renaissance Epic," "Play of Double Senses: Spenser's 'Faerie Queene,' " and "The University and the Public Interest." Baseball, for all its ordered paths, is a game of constant surprises, but its choice of a bearded Ivy League scholar-prexy, easily capable of turning the full mid-title colon, as the twelfth president of the senior circuit was a startler unmatched in the pastime since Al Weis's home run for the Mets in the fifth game of the 1969 World Series.



Giamatti's turn at the helm of Yale produced warmer relations between the university and its alumni and between town and gown, and, academically, a firming up of traditional standards; he brought in a succession of balanced budgets and, while expressing distaste for the role of "professional mendicant," achieved a handsome bulge in the endowment. Giamatti in person was candid, energetic, and, of course, splendidly voluble (he once referred to old-grad William F. Buckley, Jr., as a "limousine Luddite")—a nice range afield that certainly did not escape the notice of the baseball old boys who hired him. As expected, he has fitted smoothly and happily into his new command, and has acquired friends and devotees among the serried keepers of the game, including owners, general managers, front-office people, field managers, umpires, and (some, at least) writers. Last June, Peter Ueberroth announced that he would not be a candidate to succeed himself as commissioner of baseball when his five-year term expires at the end of 1989, and although no one has officially approached Bart Giamatti about the matter, he is, by consensus, the man most likely to take on the job.

As luck would have it, Giamatti and I kept running into each other at spring-training games in Florida and Arizona last March, and somewhere along the line we made a date to go to a game together during the regular season. Giamatti, by the time we met, had had a bumpy trip through the first couple of months of the season, thanks to the extended fuss over the new "discernible stop" clause in the enforcement of the balk rules (six hundred and forty-five balks had been called by the time of the midseason All-Star game, as against three hundred and fifty-six in the full 1987 season), and, more particularly, because of his almost unprecedented (for its severity) thirty-day suspension of Cincinnati manager Pete Rose after an umpire-shoving incident and an ugly near-riot during a Mets-Reds game at Riverfront Stadium on April 30th. However, my wish to spend a couple of hours with Giamatti at the park came not from any desire to ferret out his views on the late news or the smoldering issues of the game or to quiz him about the commissionership (by unspoken agreement, we never discussed it at all) but from the prospect of listening to a lifetime .400 talker strut his stuff in the proper setting. Giamatti's gab, I had already realized, is stylistically unique, displaying education and natural brilliance simultaneously, just as George Brett's swing says Charley Lau and *Watch out.* Standing beside the batting cage one evening at the Mets' spring-training camp at Port St. Lucie, he and I had watched Darryl Strawberry uncoil on a pitch and waft the ball lengthily into some mid-distant pine barrens. "Ah," breathed Giamatti, "that was *echt* Straw."



"Spanish ladies have nice eyes."

• •

As we drove along the Grand Central Parkway and inserted ourselves into the pre-game lines of traffic headed for the Shea parking lots, Giamatti told me a little about his job. He said that a surprising amount of his time—part of almost every day, right through the season—is given to reviewing disputed plays and field incidents and rules infractions from games around the league. There is a prescribed process of evidence-gathering, assessment and argument, judgment, notice of fines and suspensions, appeal hearings, and so forth, which begins with an umpire's telephone call to the league office after the game in question, followed by his written report within the next twenty-four hours. Videotapes of the game are consulted in most cases, and Giamatti discusses the reports and the tapes with Phyllis Collins, the National League vice-president, and Ed Vargo, chief of umpires. "The actual rules don't come into these cases very often, except perhaps on questions of interference," Giamatti told me. "More often we're assessing the severity or the length of an argument on the field. Did the player have to be restrained? Did he precipitate fan reaction? Did he throw his helmet down in anger or did he just flip it? And so on. And, of course, it can be marvellous, because the 'Rashomon' questions are always there. Does anyone know what *really* happened? You may want to go back and hear from the crew chief again, or even from the manager. Then, there's the telling and the retelling. The tape can be very helpful if there's been a brawl. You can slow it down to see who was doing what. You look and look, and then you say, 'Ooo—what was *that*? Go back, go back, go back! There! Who's that 29, and why did he do that?' Even so, you may learn something later on that changes your mind. Last year, I watched a tape of a melee involving the Braves and the Reds, and I decided that Mr. Ozzie Virgil"—Virgil is a catcher with the Braves—"had played a less than useful role in it all, and I wrote him a letter to remonstrate with him. Well, Mr. Virgil, to his credit, picked up the phone and called me and said, 'But you've got this exactly wrong. You misunderstood what you saw. I swung my arm like that because I was trying to get their guy off the pile.' A few weeks after that, there was another mass misunderstanding, in another park, in which Mr. Virgil featured prominently as a peacemaker, and I called him and said I'd seen this, and that I appreciated it. After that, Mr. Virgil and I became more than nodding acquaintances, and that was nice."

I asked whether baseball people had found it odd to hear themselves addressed as "Mister," for a change.

"That implacable first-naming seems to go way back," Giamatti said. "I think it's built in—a holdover from

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all those years when the players were the hired help, back before we got rid of the reserve clause. But they're grown men, not boys. In my first months on the job, when Chub Feeney, my predecessor, was staying around to show me the ropes, he saw a letter about an infraction I was about to send off to Dave Parker, and he advised against my 'Dear Mr. Parker.' But I didn't agree. I still like formality—it comes naturally to me—and these are grown men. Nowadays I call Pete Rose Pete, but when I first met him I called him Mr. Rose. I think you have to earn that intimacy. Baseball people are very *intime*, but there's also a reticence, a family dignity, that comes along with it. Bob Fishel, the wonderful American League executive who died the other day, personified that. So did Dick Howser." He paused and then said, "Well, owners tend to be about the age of the players' fathers, so maybe first-naming comes naturally."

I asked if there were some people in baseball who had been particularly helpful or welcoming when he first came into their special world.

"Chub was the premier," he said. "And, of course, he's a man who was born into baseball and has given his entire life to the game. He took me up in that wonderfully friendly way of his, and he was sterling. Now Ed Vargo is my standby, my buddy. But there were so many others. Pope Owens, of the Phillies. Chuck Tanner, Whitey Herzog, Al Rosen, Dallas Green. Bobby Brown, my opposite number in the American League. Frank Cashen has become a good friend, and so has Syd Thrift, of the Pirates. Some of them were interested in what I'd been doing before I came into baseball, and some less so. If there's one thing I'm an expert on, it's athletic stereotypes about academe and academic stereotypes about athletics, but it's easy to say that the baseball world showed much less prejudice about me, an academic, taking this job than the other way around. It was simply no contest."

Giamatti is close to his umpires, although the relationship is clearly a boss-employees one. The players are more distant, of course. "They think of me as a faceless bureaucrat in a suit, who can never know what it's like being out there at a particular moment in a particular game," he said. "What they do remember is being fined. Even now, a couple of years later, one of them may come up to me and say, 'Hey, you're the one who hit me for two hundred.' They don't like authority, and I admire that. I try to avoid the clubhouse. That's their workplace, their office, and they're in a hard line of work. Anyway, I'm one person who didn't come into baseball in order to make friends with the stars. I'd already known a whole lot of guys that age."

I said I'd sometimes wondered whether he wished, in retrospect, that he'd had his present power to fine and suspend back when he was running Yale, and his face lit up like a scoreboard.

"Well, maybe not with the students," he said when he'd thought about it for a minute. "There's almost no way to bargain in good faith with a student. But with the faculty—oh, would I have put it to good use!"

Did he mean there were more rules infractions among the Yale faculty than he'd found in the pastime?

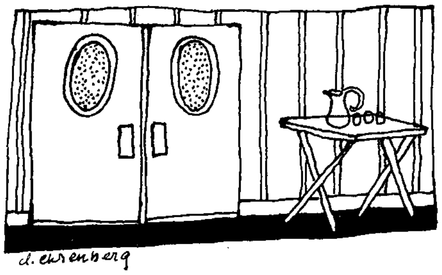
"Are you kidding?" he cried. "Of course there were more! These guys, these players, are pretty good most of the time. They try to do the right thing. But in my old job—" He shook his head. "Come to think of it, the number of people on the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Yale and the number of ballplayers in the major leagues are almost the same—somewhere around six hundred and thirty. And if we're making analogies, the umpires would be the deans. And tenure? Well, I guess even Mike Schmidt doesn't have tenure. Put the two bodies together, and what you have is one vast, unstable company of prima donnas. Skilled, yes, but oh, brother!"

WE got to Shea and parked at last—it was another full house for the Mets—and as we walked to our gate several fans recognized Giamatti and waved to him or greeted him by name. He waved back. He was talking about the daily and weekly procession of administrative detail that marches across his desk: changes in ownership, partnership alterations, season schedules, game reschedulings, television relations and revenues, scoreboard designs, ballpark music, ballpark leases, uniforms and uniform-lettering, umpire performance, umpire morale, umpire avoirdupois, spring-training sites and schedules, and—a very large detail indeed—dealings with the press. Each year, the National League issues forty or fifty bulletins to its clubs, and there is always something left over to deal with, or something unexpected happening in another part of what he called "the submerged subcontinent of administration." The week before, he had spent hours on the telephone in the course of dampening an "I Hate New York" campaign of baseball television ads in Pittsburgh—a very popular campaign, let it be said. A week or two before that, he had held extended discussions with Molly Yard, the president of the National Organization for Women, in the wake of some ill-considered remarks about NOW by Mr. Bob Knepper, the free-form Houston left-hander. "That was *exactly* like a Yale issue," Giamatti said cheerfully. "Last year, I worked as hard on my response to the Kevin Gross appeal as I worked on anything I did while I was in New Haven. It was challenging to try to be clear about cheating and what it meant, and to be fair at the same time." (Kevin Gross, a pitcher with the Phillies, was ejected from a game last year, and subsequently suspended for ten days, for affixing sandpaper to his glove, presumably in order to scuff the ball and alter its flight. Later on, I looked up the Giamatti opinion on the Gross appeal. Its ten pages of resonant text shone forth like Cardozo: "Acts of cheating are . . . secretive, covert acts that strike at and seek to undermine the basic foundation of any contest declaring the winner—that all participants play under identical rules and conditions. . . . They destroy faith in the game's integrity and fairness; if participants and spectators alike cannot assume integrity and fairness, and proceed from there, the contest cannot in its essence exist." Etc.)

All this and the rulebook, too. "When I first read through the rulebook, it seemed interesting but fairly simple," Giamatti told me. "But that was like buzzing a field from a low-flying plane—it all looked green and smooth and inviting. When I went back and walked over that same terrain on foot, so to speak, I began to find the holes and stumps and hollows and gnarled roots and treacherous washes in it. Thank God for Eddie Vargo, who annotated the book for me, and even added some cross-references—'See 7.04 and 4.10(d),' and so on. Now I've begun to learn some parts of it by heart. But there's no real end to it, because it's another wonderful compound of old law and accrued opinion, with a few passages where the intention is beyond clear interpretation. There's a sentence, part of 8.05—about what happens to the base runners when there's a hit or an error or a hit batsman or something else on a pitch that has just been called a balk—that Eddie and I have been talking about all year. I find all this pleasurably difficult. It may not be intellectual, but the intellectual quality of university life isn't very high, either, once you get into the administrative side. There are deeper implications, of course. The question of how a society goes about its recreation isn't inconsequential—not to me, at least. How human beings choose to recreate came up in my first book, 'The Earthly Paradise.' I think I've been involved in the same issues all along.

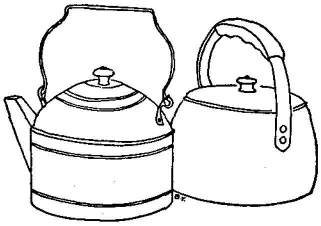
"There are people who insist that my going from my old job to this one was as if I'd suddenly taken up being a dogsled driver or something, but I don't agree. Both jobs involve historically oriented, retrospective cultures, very slow to change. They're closed in —not hermetically, but they're very conscious within themselves of who you are and of the kind of apprenticeship it takes to become whatever you're going to be. They're medieval cultures. My friends say it tells a lot about me that I was drawn to such things. There's even more, if you think about it. You're administering nonprofit organizations—the league is nonprofit—which means you have to work by suasion. You have multiple constituencies, equally intent on collaborating and competing. The departments are the teams, of course. Guilds and chivalric codes—medieval!"

BASEBALL first came looking for Bart Giamatti back in 1983, when an owners' search committee (with Bud Selig, of the Brewers, at its head) was seeking a replacement for Bowie Kuhn as commissioner and sensed the need to explore outside the immediate community of the sport. Peter Ueberroth, then engaged in administering the financing and mountainous details of the 1984 Olympic Games, in Los Angeles—he did it brilliantly—was the ultimate choice, but along the way the committee also interviewed the young president of Yale, who not only was showing a firm hand (some said more than firm) in dealing with a very difficult and divisive labor situation at Yale that year but also had written about the game of baseball with knowledge and feeling. Perhaps the best of his baseball pieces was a 1977 *Harper's* article, "Tom Seaver's Farewell," which flayed the Mets' ownership of that period for trading away a player of Seaver's ability, high principle, and clearly articulated sense of self-worth. The Mets, he concluded, had not perceived that "among all the men who play baseball there is, very occasionally, a man of such qualities of heart and mind and body that he transcends even the great and glorious game, and that such a man is to be cherished, not sold." Though Giamatti, it turned out, was not free to leave Yale just then, the combination of a strong-minded, loquacious administrator and a learned fan was hard to forget, and when the National League presidency became vacant in 1986 Peter O'Malley, of the Dodgers, came calling in New Haven.



Giamatti, in truth, knew more about the other league. He grew up in South Hadley, Massachusetts—in his words, "a place with an A. & P., a drugstore, a Filene's, and a college." His father, Valentine Giamatti, was a second-generation American, a professor of Italian language and literature at Mount Holyoke, and a Red Sox fan. With no movies and no television to distract him, young Bart grew up reading books and listening to Curt Gowdy doing the Bosox games from Fenway Park. His father took him to his first game there in 1946; Boo Ferriss was pitching for the good guys, and Bart recalls asking his old man why the fans kept booing. His father had been a graduate student at Yale some years before, and Giamatti can recall his talking about one shining day when the lordly Yankees came to New Haven to play an exhibition game and he saw Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig playing catch on Yale Green. "Those *enormous* throws," Giamatti said softly. "My father's gone now," he went on, "and I've come to realize that I never did ask him what baseball had meant to him—whether it had helped him to become American or feel American, the way it did in so many immigrant families."

We went back to the Red Sox, an infirmity we held in common (we were having supper in the Shea press lounge by this time), and he recalled a long-ago day when a car with New Hampshire plates stopped at this particular gas station in South Hadley, near his house, and the driver got no service at all: "He got out and stomped around and stared at us—ten or twenty men and boys, just standing there in the service bay. He thought he'd come to a place where he could get gas, but he was wrong. The purpose was to let us stand in the shade of the bay and listen to the Red Sox. It was like that all over New England then, of course. The Sox were the lingua franca."



I said I'd found that some of that Red Sox fervor had dimmed in recent summers in New England, perhaps beginning after Carlton Fisk's heroic twelfth-inning home run in Game Six of the 1975 World Series. (The Bosox lost the seventh game and the Series the next evening.)

"Or even after Bernie Carbo's homer," Giamatti said. "Everybody forgets that Bernie had to tie up the game first. Maybe his was the high-water mark, because it made the next one possible."

We had somehow skipped over Game Six of the 1986 World Series, when the Mets (representing President Giamatti's own league, of course) survived defeat at the last possible instant, thanks to Bill Buckner's horrendous muff of a Series-ending grounder at first base, and went on to seize a world championship that the Red Sox had held within their grasp. I had seen the miserably victorious Giamatti just after that game, and he had looked worn and wan, like Odysseus thrown up on still another beach: a man wrung dry by the gods.

"Everyone in America remembers where he was when Fisk hit his home run," Giamatti was saying. "My wife, Toni, and I were home in bed on Central Avenue, in New Haven, with the set on—it was after midnight, of course—and our three kids were supposed to be asleep, but, of course, they were outside, prowling around. Then they heard us yelling, and they came rushing in pretending they didn't know what was happening. We all ended up jumping up and down on the bed together."

We talked a little about baseball's power to act as a clear-amber preservative of long-gone innings and instants, and Giamatti said he was constantly surprised at the way old pitchers could recall an entire sequence of pitches they had thrown to a particular batter in a particular at-bat thirty or forty years ago.

I asked if he ever got back to Fenway these days, and he hunched his shoulders conspiratorially and whispered, "Now and then. Once this year, once last year. I make official visits to all the National League parks every season, of course—or try to—but this is off-duty. I even saw part of a Yale game this spring, too. I was back in New Haven on a weekend—my family still lives there, and I sort of camp out in New York during the week—and the coach, wonderful Joe Benanto, let me come and sit in the dugout for a couple of innings."

The Yale connection will not quite go away. I said I had noticed that a few baseball writers and columnists still tended to mention his professorial background and Ivy League roots whenever they disagreed with some edict of his. (This had come up in force at the time of the Pete Rose suspension, when a Philadelphia columnist, Peter Pascarelli—among many others, to the same general effect—complained in *The Sporting News*, "The ludicrously lengthy 30-day sentence dealt to Rose by a league president whose baseball credentials consist of waxing poetic about the beauties of Fenway Park . . ." and "To make Rose the guilty party . . . is to ignore significant evidence you'd think a Yale professor would weigh.")

Giamatti shrugged. "I don't want to be viewed as commenting on these people, but I have a very clear taxonomy in my head about who these particular writers are," he said. "There are about three of them who still like to go on about my background, but it's strange that when they want to take me to task they've never called me up to ask 'Why did you do that insane thing?' or 'What foolishness did you have in mind there?' Not once. Other writers and broadcasters are much better about that, but sometimes when one of them has slipped in some mention of me and Yale or me and Dante I tell the little story about when Pat Moynihan was campaigning for the Senate for the first time, and his opponent, early in some television debate, called him 'Professor.' Pat threw up his hands and said, 'Uh-oh—the mudslinging starts!' "

The academic community and Yale itself can't quite shed the old connections, either. A number of people within the temple simply couldn't believe that Giamatti would move along into something like baseball, and there were scandalized late-night telephone calls and murmurous dining-hall conversations that came down to "He's *kidding*—he can't be serious!" Giamatti told me that his taking the job had seemed the ultimate *trahison des clercs* to some but that there had been divisions of opinion about it. "Historians and littérateurs tended to find it logical," he said. "Mathematicians and scientists were not happy. Philosophers almost enjoyed the idea. Some friends—I realized that I knew a lot of baseball fans on the faculty—even said, 'Great! Good for you!' For these valiant few I'd worked up a line that went 'I'm almost fifty years old and I've just fallen in love and run away with a beautiful redhead with flashing eyes whose name is baseball.' My wife, who's a blonde, said to me, 'Why did she have to be a redhead?' But, seriously, what you need to remember is that my taking the league president's job caused much less of a shock and seemed much less of a sellout to the academic community than my previous move, from teaching to administration—to being a college president. That was considered infinitely worse—it was as if I'd joined the Vietcong. There's a distinguished professor of literature at Columbia who stopped speaking to me the day I did that, but now that I'm in baseball we're friends again. It was that first move that was outré. Well, I'm not High Church anymore. It's as though I became a Quaker first and then an Anabaptist."

He laughed, and we got up and headed down for the game. Looking at him, I had the impression that he was still going over his last turn of phrase in his mind, like a brilliant painter stepping back from his canvas for an instant to see what he had just put up there.

IT was a good night to be at the park—warm and muggy, but with a little edge to the occasion. This was the eighty-fourth game for the Mets, just past the midpoint of the long season, and although they held a six-and-a-half-game lead in the N.L. East over the second-place Pirates, the famous and favored locals had shown some recent vapory spells and still gave the impression that they hadn't quite taken firm hold on their fortunes. Just the night before, Cincinnati's Tom Browning and John Franco had held them to four hits in the course of a 3–1 shellacking. We were in Mets courtesy seats, directly behind home plate and ten or twelve rows up from the screen. During the evening, various members of Giamatti's *cuadrilla* at the league office turned up to join us, including Cathy Davis, who is housemother, travel agent, and big sister to the league's twenty-seven umpires; and, for a few outs or innings at a time, Ed Vargo. The Papa Ump whispered something to Giamatti at one point, and when Bart let out a laugh Vargo told me about it, too. "It was nothing," he said. "Only, just now in the umpires' room Frank Pulli was saying he's decided he's going to start calling the boss Angelo from now on." (*Angelo* Bartlett Giamatti—I'd never asked.) "He said he knew it'd probably cost him two hundred, but he didn't care. 'He's *paisan*, isn't he?' he said. I said, 'Make that four hundred.' "

"Frank Pulli is a strong character, with whom I've had a few moderate run-ins," Giamatti said. "He's also a fine umpire. You know, there's almost nothing like sitting with scouts at a game, because that's where you learn how this game is played. But I've learned that the umpires have a detailed, precise knowledge of baseball and what it takes to play it and win it. But, of course, all that is bottled up in them. They don't let it out."

The Mets' starter on this evening was Ron Darling, who had pitched for Yale in his day—pitched for Bart Giamatti, you might say—but I noticed that my companion didn't say much about the coincidence once we'd noticed it. Then I remembered that he, too, had to keep baseball bottled up now.

"I'm still a fan, but an entirely different kind of fan now," Giamatti said a bit later. "Not rooting is a deprivation. You're not just watching the game, you're trying to get the feel of the game—the umpires, the crowd, the ushers, the drinking. It's entirely different. You feel responsible for what's happening, and with the umpires you *are* responsible. It's like loving the theatre all your life and then becoming a producer. You still get that thrill, except you know more about the sets and the flats and the lighting board and what the unions are asking for today."

Darling finally set down the Reds in the first, after giving up a walk and a single, and as the teams were changing sides a fan came down the aisle and introduced himself to Giamatti. "Izzy Padula," he said, seizing the presidential paw. "Look, I didn't want to bother you, but my cousin is Joe Padula, who was a student of yours once, and he'd want me to say hello. He lives out in Brielle now and has a medical practice in Point Pleasant."

"Joe Padula!" Giamatti cried. "My God! Joe Padula was a student of mine for first-year Italian, back when I was an instructor at Princeton. Of *course* I remember him, but that must have been—it must have been 1964, and the class met on the second floor of East Pyne. Up the stairs and to your left. I can't believe it."

After Padula had taken his leave, carrying warm greetings to his cousin from his old teacher and invitations for him to call up when he was next in New York, I started to remind Giamatti about something, but he beat me to it, of course. "That's *exactly* what we were talking about!" he said. "That's like an old pitcher remembering a slider he threw back in 1950. Joe Padula—isn't that amazing! I think it must have something to do with remembering times when you were really focussed. It's about intensity."

There was a short, explosive noise on the field before us, and Giamatti and I shifted focus to the upper and outer right-field sector, where the ball, having encountered the bat of Darryl Strawberry, was now disappearing into the darkness behind the Met bullpen. Straw eased around the bases and accepted a low five from Wally Backman, who had come to the home place just in front of him. "Where did that *go!*" Giamatti said, his pleasure safely unnoticed in the forty-thousand-tonsils din. (Later we learned that the ball had

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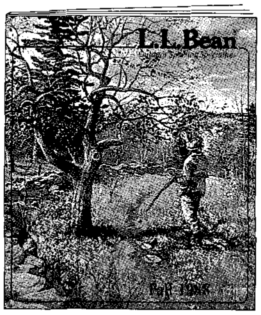

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bounced off the Reds' team bus, peacefully parked out in the lot.)

Jack Armstrong, the eponymous—*fairly* eponymous—Cincinnati right-hander, kicked the mound a couple of times as he rubbed up the new ball, but before he could deliver a pitch to Howard Johnson, the next Mets batter, home-plate ump Doug Harvey walked a few steps toward the mound, asking for the ball. He examined it for a moment, and then flipped it back to Armstrong, and the game went on.

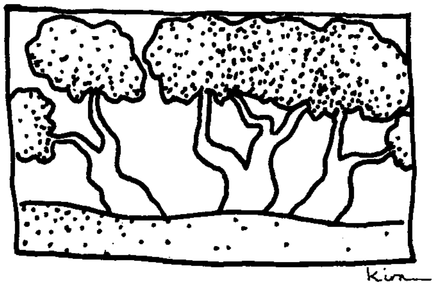
"Did you see that?" Giamatti said. "That's not about scuffing the ball—no way. That's Doug Harvey letting the pitcher know he wants no response from out there. It's a little message. Doug Harvey is a master at running a game. His games move right along—you'll see."

The game—both games, in fact: the baseball and the baseball talk—flew along, almost too quickly and pleasurably for recapitulation. I did my best to keep up, and my scorecard still preserves some vivid Giamatti at-bats:

On inside pitches: "The umpire is caught in the middle—as usual. Because of some recent changes, he has to issue warnings from time to time, not because he thinks anything is going on but only because the batter is upset. It's a general warning—to keep order, but not as the result of any infraction or intention. And that's too bad: it's a misuse. The batters have the upper hand just now, and they're much less inclined to put up with something that was once accepted as a normal part of the game. That inside pitch used to be thrown to reëstablish the pitcher's part of the plate. There's a general effort to sanitize the game right now, and I don't care for it. I think a batter who crowds the plate—and more and more of them are doing it—should understand that it's a legitimate strategy in the struggle between him and the pitcher, and he can expect that tight inside pitch in response. And I'm not talking about anybody throwing at a batter intentionally or exacting punishment or paying him back—that's something else altogether. We don't want anybody charging the mound. I think my view about this is probably the umpires' view, too."

On ballparks: "More domes are coming, and I regret it. This game is meant to be played outdoors and on grass, but I don't see how we can expect a city to come up with a hundred-million-dollar stadium-bond issue and not want to amortize that with conventions and car-crushing contests and football and the rest, which call for all-season stadiums. What I don't understand is the lack of imagination in ballpark design. I've gotten fond of this place"—he gestured at the tatty encircling rows and banked levels of Shea—"but that's because I'm used to it. Modern ballparks are the most conventional architecture since Mussolini's social realism. Why can't we build an idiosyncratic, angular park, for a change, with all the amenities and conveniences, and still make it better than anything we have now? I just don't get it. A ballpark should be a box, not a saucer—everybody knows that—but why couldn't we walk *down* to our seats, for a change: dig a stadium, instead of always starting flat and then going up? It might even solve the wind problem in some places. Why can't we think up a stadium that would have some of the virtues of a Fenway Park—a place of weird angles and distances and beautiful ricochets? It could be done."

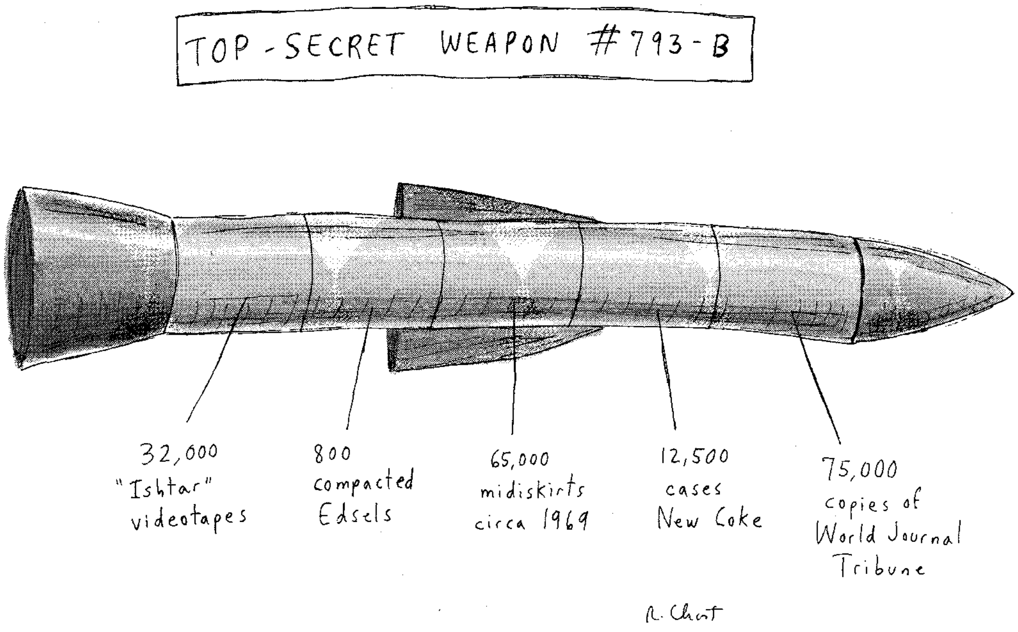
On instant replay: "We had that moment in Pittsburgh the other day when Paul Runge, who was working the plate, called a wild pitch but then reversed himself when he looked up on the Diamond Vision board and saw that the ball had actually touched the batter's bat and deflected. He called it a foul. There was a terrific stink, but I commended him later for not taking the easy way and denying he'd seen something he saw. A lot of columnists and commentators and media types got on me after that and said that now the instant-replay cameras would descend on baseball and would be used as the determining factor in close decisions, but they were wrong about that—as they could have found out if they'd bothered to give me a call. I don't like the instant replay. We don't need it for decisions, and for fans it damages imagination and diminishes our memories. I was talking with Stan Isaacs, of *Newsday*, about this just this afternoon, and I said that the 'Marseillaise' scene in 'Casablanca' has absolutely lost its dramatic force, because we've all seen it so often. We know it by heart. It even occurred to me to make some kind of connection between instant replay and hard-core pornography, but then I decided it wasn't quite the example to give when talking about a family game."



On drunken fans: "The Mets are making a real effort to control drinking here, mostly by persuasion, and I think the situation has already got better. The same thing is happening in other parks, with differing degrees of success. It's something that has to be brought under control; we all have the horrifying example of the British soccer crowds before us. We get more letters and comments on call-in radio shows about the environment and ambience of baseball than about anything else, I think. The ramifications go on and on, sometimes in quite specific form. Beer drinking affects the condition of the rest rooms, and the state of the ladies' rooms is an important matter for baseball and the kinds of audiences and kind of future it will have."

On mascots, ballgirls, pre-game bands, etc.: "It sort of depends on how it's done. We don't have a halftime in this sport, thank God, but in some places I've begun to notice what I think of as the N.F.L.-ization of baseball. This isn't a patriotic-territorial military sport. I've fought against the pre-game parachutists. I think there are a few people in the business who secretly suspect that baseball isn't interesting or entertaining enough on its own. They're like theatrical companies who only want to do Shakespeare in motorcycle boots and leather jackets. They've given up on the beautiful language."

On labor relations, owners v. players, etc.: "Everything in baseball is a throwback— No, I won't say that, no way! Everything in baseball . . . uh . . . goes back and back, which is why you see the owners acting like nineteenth-century capitalists at times, and the players acting like union members from the late nineteen-thirties. It's a nineteenth-century game, and people in it tend to be strongly individualistic. Free agency is only about twelve years old, and baseball has been exempt from monopoly regulation all along. I think it still may feel exempt from a lot of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other considerations and patterns of behavior as well. The players were chattels for far too long. I'm convinced that the sudden huge escalation in salaries came in part from a pent-up guilt among the owners about their delay in bringing about what was fair. Now the market has taken over. But it's hard to be an owner, and I trust and admire most of the ones I've come to know. It isn't easy to be a colleague and a competitor at the same time—to help set policy with the commissioner and to remember at the same time that the idea is to have intense competition. Baseball is a small industry—it's about like the paper-box business—but with this intense, worldwide visibility. It's like no other enterprise I've ever heard of."

On the balk rule: "It's beginning to work out. The pitchers have adjusted, by and large, and the media are calming down, too, I hope. Our National League umpires began calling that full stop last year, so it's not all *that* new. I've been kidded for adding the word 'discernible' to the language of baseball, but there were ten or twelve other people in the room when we agreed on the language, and they all knew what it meant and what we were after. It had got so that the pitchers were just changing direction out there, instead of coming to the stop that the rules called for. Now they understand. What still fries me is the complaint that the balk calls were slowing up the game. Look, the pitcher balks, an umpire puts up his hand and points to the next base, and the base runner walks down there—it all takes less time than a batter stepping out and refastening his batting glove."

GIAMATTI sustained this lecternless flow without pause or visible effort, and kept his full attention on the game and its sideshows as well. He smoked Benson & Hedges cigarettes and drank a soda and chatted amicably with his colleagues and with a party of young men just behind us, whose tickets to the game had been left for them by John Franco, the Cincinnati bullpen ace—a schoolmate of theirs at Lafayette High School, in Brooklyn. "Sandy Koufax's old school," Giamatti said when they told us about this. "Also Fred Wilpon's—you know, the Mets' co-owner. And then Franco went on to pitch at St. John's, didn't he?" And very soon he was discussing which Italian neighborhood and which streets in Brooklyn our neighbors and John Franco had grown up in, and which city parks they had played in there.

"You're a fan," one of the young men said.

"Thank you, sir," Giamatti said.

The names of the National League starters for the All-Star game, less than a week away, went up on the scoreboard, and we discussed the lineup, position by position, and who wasn't there and why. Then the message disappeared, and Giamatti said, "Aw, c'mon! Leave it up there a minute, will you! That's *my* franchise, just for this week."

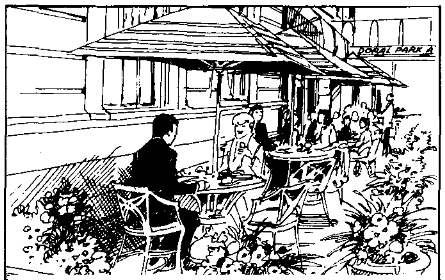
"I detect a bias," said one of the men behind us.

"Yeah, if you'd been in the other league, you'd have had Billy Martin *shot*—right?" said his companion.

Giamatti was silent, just barely, but he fielded the inevitable next question, about his current relations with Pete Rose, without missing a step. "Pete's a pro," he said. "He doesn't agree about the thirty days, but we've talked about it. He's a great man." To me, he added that he had received unsigned ballots from the twelve league managers listing their choices for the pitchers to be named to the All-Star squad—the league handles that part, not the fans—and that one of the ballots had come in with "Thirty days is still too long!" written across the bottom. "I saw Pete today," Giamatti said, "and the first thing he said was 'You get my ballot?' He was tickled."

I said that thirty days had seemed just about right to *me* (one of the umpires, Dave Pallone, had been pelted with objects thrown from the Cincinnati stands after the argument and the shoving incident, and had actually been forced to leave the field—a first in my baseball recollection), and added that I'd wondered about the kind of complaints that had come into his office after the decision, and their number.

"Well, we didn't keep exact count," Giamatti said, "but there must have been at least five hundred letters, and a few hundred phone calls on top of that. Seventy-five or eighty per cent of the mail opposed the decision, and the great majority of those complaints came from Ohio and Kentucky, which is Reds country. And I'm not even talking about the obscene mail and calls—we don't pay attention to those. The letters in support of the suspension came from all over, but there weren't as many, of course. At that, the number of Pete Rose letters didn't approach what came to me in New Haven in 1981 after I made a speech laying into the Moral Majority, and the level of bitterness in this one didn't come close to what I heard after I once refused to let the Yale Glee Club sing the Solidarity anthem in a broadcast for the Voice of America. George Will practically stripped me of my citizenship. I was accustomed to being called a dangerous right-wing radical, but this time the student press began to compare me



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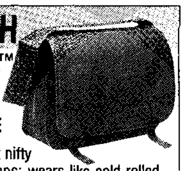

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with General Franco and some other epigones of the right. So I got it in stereo that time. For sheer noise, the Rose thing was probably bigger. This was a more public issue, and Pete just about owns lower Ohio and points east and west. Actually, everybody feels that he or she owns baseball, right across the country, which is one of its incomparable assets."

At about this point, the scoreboard flashed a trivia question, asking us to name the Most Valuable Player of the 1982 All-Star game, in Montreal. Giamatti sat up.

"With these board questions, the answer is always a guy who is here at the park, on one of the two teams," he said. "Only this time I don't think—"

The answer went up a moment or two later: Dave Concepcion, the veteran Cincinnati shortstop.

"I knew it," Giamatti said. "Only, he happens to not be on the premises. Mr. Concepcion threw a base during a game argument a little while ago, and I had to let him know it would cost him a couple of days. He just withdrew his appeal, so he won't be around tonight to read his name up there. But it feels funny that I'm here and he's not. Should that bother me, I wonder."

THE Mets and the Reds gave us a great show, it turned out. Ron Darling, cruising along on a two-hitter and still ahead by 2–0 in the sixth, suddenly gave up a single and then a low, hurrying two-run home run to Kal Daniels. Then Chris Sabo singled and Paul O'Neill bonked *another* homer: 4–2, Reds. If you had reached under your seat to retrieve a fallen peanut, you would have missed the whole thing. The Mets masses issued a bee-swarm murmur of disbelief, which Kevin McReynolds, in the Mets' half of the same inning, stilled with a lead-off wrong-field double, just fair down the line in right. I was on my feet, yelling, and so was Bart Giamatti: "Great call, Frank! That's staying on the ball out there!" To me, he said, "Did you see him get down that line on that call? Just great." He was talking about his first-base umpire, Frank Pulli.

The Reds changed pitchers, and Strawberry, with the encircling masses screeching and beating their paws in supplication, struck out mightily. But Howard Johnson walked, and Dave Magadan singled in McReynolds, to cut the Reds' lead to one. Gary Carter, up to pinch-hit, mattered in several ways, because Darling, approaching the on-deck circle, was now wavering once again on the edge of invisibility, with another loss or still another no-decision game—his specialty, so to speak—to show for his night's work. Carter bounced a single to left, tying the game. Spared for the moment, Darling was allowed to bat for himself, and stepped up gratefully, waggling his bat like Frank Merriwell.

"You remember how he used to hit at Yale?" said the other Old Blue, and Darling, on the instant, whacked the first pitch on a line into center, putting the Mets in front once again.

"Good call!" I shouted into Giamatti's ear. The noise around us was insupportable.

"I was impressed, myself," he said. We sat down again.

But Darling couldn't quite believe it all, either. With two out in the Cincinnati seventh, he nailed Barry Larkin on the shoulder (it was his second Larkin-plunk of the evening), quickly went to two balls on Daniels, and was gone. Randy Myers, the Mets' hulking left-handed fireballer, stalked to the mound, took a Clint Eastwood gander at the unpromising scene, and blew Daniels away on three straight fastballs.

It was one of those moments when a game fulfills the home crowd's uttermost desires, and even after the teams had changed sides and we had stood and stretched and root-root-rooted for the home team, the party din continued to swell and beat all about us, as bits of paper and peanut shells took wing in the soft summer air. Giamatti stretched his arms out along our seat backs and smiled and said, "Look, just look. Even the weather has changed—it's a great night for baseball. Here's a big, beautiful crowd behaving itself and having the time of its life, and I'm the only guy here in a coat and tie. But I don't care—you can't have everything, can you?"

The game rushed to its ending now, thanks to Randy Myers. He picked up the last six Cincinnati outs with a handful of pitches, fanning another batter and not allowing anything beyond the infield. The crowd ate it up, and for the last couple of outs everybody in the place was up on his feet, chanting and clapping, rocking along on the tremendous sounds from the loudspeakers, yelling for more. Giamatti and I looked around at the exuberant faces near us and stretching away from us and above us in countless rows. We were smiling, too, of course—it was terrific fun—but I think we were watching the crowd as well, perhaps in that self-conscious, smiley way that older people take on when they've been allowed into a kids' party. And, anyway, we'd been talking about baseball crowds. I had remembered some recent remarks of Giamatti's, as quoted by Murray Chass in a *Times* piece, about the possible expansion of the major leagues in the nineteen-nineties, and the current expectations, or demands, of a good many cities around the country that now felt it was their turn to have a big-league team, too. Giamatti had claimed there was an "entitlement mentality" at large among the American people, which said, "I have made my demand, I have made it courteously, I have made it stridently, but I have made my demand and I am entitled to the solution I have demanded." He called this point of view understandable but said that things didn't necessarily happen that way in the real world. Now I asked him if the same notion didn't extend to a lot of fans at the parks these days. Were they perhaps saying that they expected their team always to win when they were there, that they were entitled to a winning team, and that they could protest stridently or violently or drunkenly whenever that didn't happen?

"Could be," he said. "Maybe there's that carryover. But I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that this is a legacy of the sixties—the old conviction that if any private sentiment is strong enough it's entitled to carry the day. It's a form of late romanticism."

"Are you saying that George Steinbrenner is a hippie?" I said.

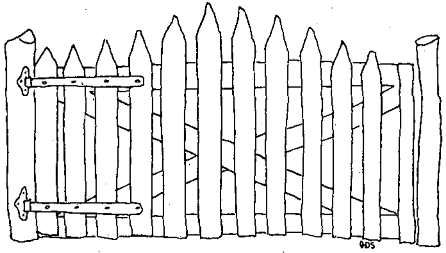
"I'll pass on that," he said, shooting me a look. "But there's a connection. Let's call the crowd feelings Emersonian. There's this wonderful American sense that if we will it, it will happen, because we're supremely gifted as a people. We have all this space and all this boundless energy. Nothing is beyond our grasp, and if obstacles inevitably do arise—whether technological or ideological or civic or accidental—there still can be no final check to the primacy of the heart. Yes, I believe that fans have come to believe that it's always their turn to win now and that it's not fair when this doesn't happen. That notion prevails in many cities and ballparks, though maybe not in Boston, where there's an older ethos that says you've never been promised *anything*, and that it's good enough for you to be able to get up in the morning and start reading some more. I almost think Boston fans don't want to win it all—they'd rather have winning out there as a shining ideal."

But what about the prevalent nastiness in the stands now, I wanted to know—the heavy drinking, the fistfights breaking out in the late innings, with young fans watching all *that* with such visible pleasure, and seemingly willing to forget the game in the process? What was going on?

"It's that notion that there should be no checks on frustration," Giamatti said. "We're not supposed to block it. We fans are licensed to come here and do virtually anything we want, because this is one of the last places where anything of the sort is allowed. Recreational violence in the stands is the entitlement mentality—not so much because we feel we're entitled to win as because we're convinced that we're entitled to do whatever we feel like. It's the sacramentalizing of the individual, the primacy of *me*."

The Mets took the field for the top of the ninth, and, out of habit, I began to pencil in some totals on the Mets side of my score sheet.

"Look," Giamatti went on, in his alert, cheerful way. "You and I are traditional fans. We come here in a ceremonial fashion. We don't exactly kneel, but we're interested only in that stuff"—he gestured at the diamond and the outspread field before us—"for our basic information. We come to testify. We're not participatory fans. For them, that object"—he pointed to the towering Diamond Vision board in left center—"is more important than anything that happens on the field. For them, it's the videos and the dot races and the commercials, which are probably all connected to rock music in the end. For us, it's still the pitcher and the batter and the score, which are connected to the printed page. This is our text, that's theirs. It differs from stadium to stadium, but there are places where the big board seems to be trying to make sure that the game never interrupts the show. I don't think that the rock connection automatically means violence. But there's a great section of the crowd now that comes to the games in order to move around, to see their friends, to drink, and to wait for the TV camera to point their way. The game is O.K.—they may even like it—but it's mostly an occasion for their privatized pleasures. It's going to be interesting to see how baseball accommodates itself to these two audiences. All of us are adept at reading signals nowadays, and most of the baseball clues are coming from the board and the loudspeakers. What I hear is a lot of Queen and Bruce Springsteen, and not much 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game.' Like it or not, those are the cultural expectations."



AFTER the game, Giamatti and I walked down to the umpires' room, in the nether catacombs of Shea, so that he could visit his crew. The four men were sweaty but cheerful, and they greeted Giamatti almost effusively. Umps have a lonely life, and they love company. Giamatti congratulated them on a good game. Frank Pulli was tucking into some cold pasta on a paper plate. Giamatti asked after his wife.

"She's doin' great," Pulli said, "and now says it looks like it's going to be twins."

"Two *more* Frank Pullis!" Giamatti exclaimed.

Doug Harvey, who is tall and white-haired and magisterial, peeled off his blue short-sleeved shirt and a soaked T-shirt and then started unstrapping the hinged plastic upper-body and upper-arm protector that home-plate umps wear as armor. Giamatti asked about the three hit batsmen (Dave Magadan had also taken a pitch to the shoulder, late in the game), and Harvey said, "Darling has that palm-ball, or whatever he calls it—we've seen it before—that backs up a foot or more, it looks like, and that's what gets Larkin the first time. The other time—what was it, the seventh?—the pitch just gets away from Darling. He's trying to hold a one-run lead late in the game—no way he wants to hit anybody. Nobody thought different. The pitch that

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hit Backman—no, it was Magadan—was just a good close inside pitch. It was legitimate, in the zone, and Magadan was leaning. I told him so and I made the sign. No problems."

"Good game," Giamatti said. "Thank you."

The four umpires were heading off to Atlanta and the Braves-Expos games there over the weekend—their last stop before the All-Star break, the coming week. Frank Pulli was to be one of the umps at the All-Star game, in Cincinnati. (The job is rotated among the umpires in both leagues, like the league-championship games and the World Series.) Harvey told us that his wife was flying in from the West Coast to meet him in Atlanta, and they would take a trip to the Georgia beaches during the short holiday. "I've never been out there," he said. "I'm glad she's coming, because of Lee. I'm taking that hard, I don't mind saying." A few days earlier, Lee Weyer, a veteran National League umpire, had died of a heart attack in San Francisco, where he had been working a Cubs-Giants series. He and Harvey had both come into the league as rookie umpires in 1962. The funeral plans were not yet complete, and Harvey and Giamatti talked a little now about what kind of memorial service might be arranged later on. Then Giamatti and I said our farewells and walked out to the parking lot, back with the crowds again.

"Umpires are a brotherhood," Giamatti said after we got into the car. "Lee Weyer never married, but he was a warm man. One thing I remember about him is the way he dusted off the plate. He'd dust it clean and then he'd make this clear outline around the perimeter of the plate, with his brush. Nobody else did that."

We talked of other things on the slow homeward trip to Manhattan, but now and then in the car, and in the days since that evening, I wondered what other people in the closed, special world of baseball made of Bart Giamatti. I could certainly ask some of them, but not quite in the usual ways—not casually or as a reporter, that is—because of the chance that the owners may choose him to be the next commissioner. This has changed things, and whatever an owner or a manager, or even a player, might say about Giamatti now, good or bad, would have the taste of campaign news. He had already begun to slip away from me a little, and I wanted more, of course. Then I remembered, almost as an afterthought, that he was a writer, and over the next week or two I found some of his books and began to dip into them at odd moments, reading almost at random and looking more for the author than for some new appreciation of bygone prosody or passion. One day, leafing through "Exile and Change in Renaissance Literature," I thought I had a sudden glimpse of him—not with his tie and blazer but in brighter, heraldic colors—in the person of Matteo Boiardo, a fifteenth-century Italian poet, whose great work was "Orlando Innamorato."

"Boiardo's deepest desire is to conserve something of purpose in a world of confusion," Giamatti had written. "He knows that chivalry is an outmoded system, but he wants to keep something of its value, its respect for grace and noble behavior, even while he relinquishes its forms and structures. . . . Boiardo wants to check the urge to dissolution . . . that time seems inevitably to embody. He does not want to turn back the clock and regain the old world, but he does want to recapture the sense of control of oneself, if nothing else, that marked life under the old system. He wants to be able to praise something other than the giddy, headlong rush." —ROGER ANGELL

•

FARCE

Allow me to rearrange my bones—
those awkward obstacles
blocking my flesh,

leading it, forcing it into
a pear (my woman's shape)
or starfish (my hands).

Allow my bones to
try out new geometries—
the outline of the world's first
schooner, or the transparent
skeleton of a lily,
or the genealogical tree
with its posthumous fruit,
its final offspring barren.

Allow my bones to kneel down
when I pretend to pray,
so that the Kind Paleontologist
will be fooled at least once!

—NINA CASSIAN

(*Translated, from the Rumanian, by Christopher Hewitt.*)

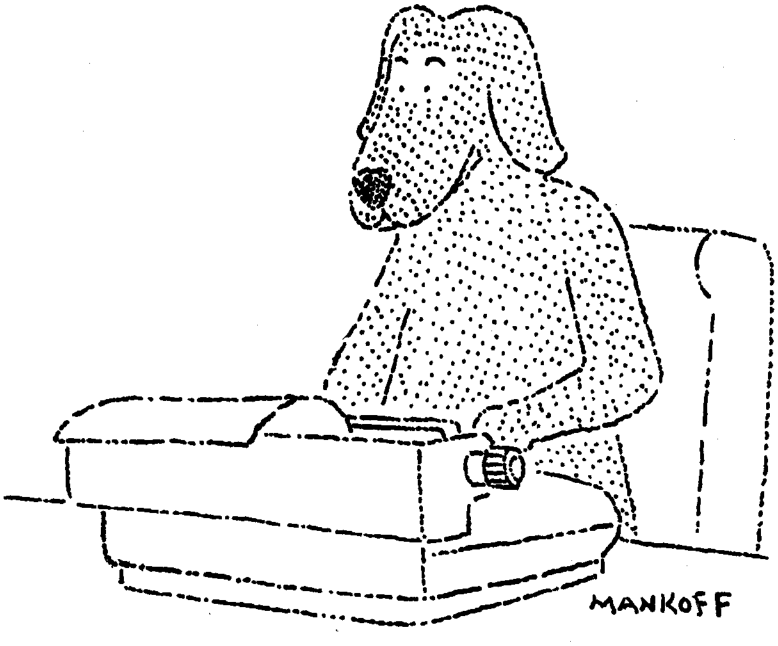
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Family Business

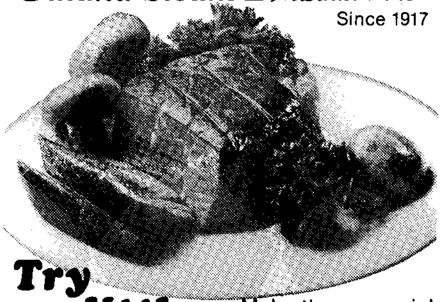
JONATHAN DEMME'S "Married to the Mob" is a crazy comedy about normalcy. Its heroine, Angela (Michelle Pfeiffer), is married to an up-and-coming suburban gangster, and she doesn't feel good about her life; she's avid for ordinariness. Unlike the other mob wives, she finds it a little unsettling that the living room of her expensive Long Island house is piled high with hot appliances (in unopened boxes); that her son is relieving the neighborhood kids of their allowances by running a three-card-monte game in the back yard; that when her husband (Alec Baldwin), a handsome hit man known as Frank the Cucumber, can't find his gun their son knows exactly where it is. Frank thinks it's "a swell house," and he's proud of the boy for conning twelve bucks out of his little pals. "Everything we own fell off a truck!" Angela screams. "Everything has blood on it!" When she mentions divorce, he just laughs and laughs: he can't believe how naïve she is. The other wives sense something peculiar about Angela, but they can't imagine that anyone might actually be dissatisfied with the consumer wonderland they all live in, or uneasy about the nature of the family business; to them she's just a bitch. And after her husband is murdered these fierce women view Angela with even greater suspicion. Unattached, this gorgeous young woman is a threat to their most prized possessions, their men. Their condolences to the widow are delivered with menacing undertones: "We are your friends, Angela, whether you like it or not." She flees this nightmare parody of middle-class comfort with a righteous urgency, giving all her tainted worldly goods—virtually the entire contents of her house—to Goodwill Industries, and moving herself and her reluctant kid into a cramped, peeling, tub-in-kitchen apartment on the Lower East Side. The funniest thing about all this is that Angela—a tough suburban cookie with a sinus-clearing Long Island accent, a mop of savagely permed dark hair, a face whose muscles are taut from ferocious gum-chewing, and the killer walk of a woman who has been wearing pants a size too small and heels an inch too high since about the sixth grade—really is an angel. Her hoop earrings are as big as halos.

Although the script, by Barry Strugatz and Mark R. Burns, is fairly conventional, it's not hard to figure out what must have attracted Jonathan Demme to this material. While zipping through the plot's screwball convolutions—Angela is being pursued by her late husband's boss and murderer, Tony (the Tiger) Russo (Dean Stockwell), who's got the hots for her, they are both being stalked by Tony's insanely jealous wife, Connie (Mercedes Ruehl), the Feds are after the lot of them, and Angela is falling in love with a goofy young F.B.I. agent (Matthew Modine) who's tailing her—Demme takes the opportunity to indulge in his own low-key brand of cultural anthropology. It obviously tickles him to juxtapose the crass opulence of "family" life on Long Island (and in Miami Beach, where the story has its climax) with the multi-ethnic funk of the Lower East Side, and to make grubby Rivington Street the locus of the movie's values, the place where Angela can feel *normal.* He's right on the verge of seeming too cool, too hip, too culturally correct, but he's saved by a kind of natural innocence that is perhaps the same thing as a filmmaker's curiosity. When Demme shows us a mob hangout called the King's Roost, a restaurant whose garish fake-medieval façade looks about the size of the Babylonian set for "Intolerance," and an ornate love chamber in the Fantasia Motel (where Frank, arriving for a rendezvous with Tony the Tiger's mistress, meets his end), we don't sense any superiority in his attitude toward these bad-taste monuments. He seems amazed by them—thrilled by their brazenness, delighted at how fully their extravagant design expresses the outsized personalities of the characters who move through them, awed at the discovery of a culture in which such structures are the landscape of ordinary life. Even in the cartoonish world of "Married to the Mob" Demme is happy simply to observe, without imposing himself on the material. Of the major American directors, he's the least erratic, the most consistently good company, because he has interests rather than obsessions.

Demme, who makes documentaries and music videos as well as fiction films ("Citizens Band," "Melvin and Howard," "Something Wild"), is great at providing incidental pleasures, the weird, heterogeneous stuff that American culture is so abundant in. As usual in his pictures, the music is terrific. David Byrne's original score suggests an inspired parody of spaghetti-Western music, and there are a couple of dozen songs by a diverse bunch of performers, including New Order, Sinead O'Connor, Tom Tom Club, Chris Isaak, Brian Eno, Ziggy Marley, the Feelies, a samba band called Pé-De-Boi (who are seen performing in a dance-club sequence), and Rosemary Clooney



"The quick brown dog jumps over the lazy fox."



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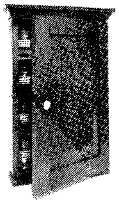

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(who sings "Mambo Italiano" over the opening credits). One of the film's music supervisors, Gary Goetzman, plays the small role of the pianist at the King's Roost, who gives Tony the Tiger some impromptu theme music when the mob boss walks in: "Hey, it's Tony the Tiger, he's the *paisan* the sun always shines on." (This is a piano player who knows how not to get shot.) Demme pauses in the middle of a surveillance scene to allow his F.B.I.-agent hero to harmonize with some street singers (the group True Image), and then lingers for a minute on a sidewalk performer who calls himself Mr. Spoons. And the casting is superbly eccentric. Tiny roles are filled by such distinctive actors as Charles Napier, Joan Cusack, Trey Wilson, Tracey Walter, Al Lewis, and David Johansen (playing a priest); strange, memorable faces seem to be popping out at us all the time. Dean Stockwell makes Tony the Tiger a wonderfully demented villain, a middle-class thug who loves to sing burger-chain jingles; who after practically raping Angela in her yard on the day of her husband's funeral smiles sweetly to himself, as if he had truly conquered her heart; and who lives in mortal fear of his wife, who has vowed to hunt him down "like an animal" if she discovers that he has been unfaithful. Mercedes Ruehl makes us believe it. Her Connie is overpowering, implacable, horrifyingly funny. When she shouts "You can call me a ball-buster, but it's just the way I am!" Ruehl fills us with pity, terror, and glee.

The major pleasure of "Married to the Mob," though, is Michelle Pfeiffer. What resonance this comedy has comes directly out of her classic, fine-featured American beauty; even with that hair, that wardrobe, that walk, that accent, she manages to suggest an unkillable innocence, a spirit that refuses to be coarsened. She gives an extraordinary performance: she makes both Angela's toughness and her goodness believable, funny, and touching. Her vulgarity and her almost ethereal delicacy seem indistinguishable—which makes her a perfect embodiment of what Jonathan Demme's movies are all about.

If the movie feels a little thinner than Demme's very best work, it's partly because Modine's character is underwritten, so the romantic resolution of the fairy tale isn't fully satisfying; we don't quite know what it means for Angela to have wound up with this gawky, sweet-natured junior G-man. As gangster comedies go, "Married to the Mob" doesn't have the satiric kick of "Prizzi's Honor" or the wild lyricism of "Shoot the Piano Player." It's just a smart, genial entertainment that gives us plenty to look at and listen to. It comes as close to being a normal Hollywood movie as anything Demme has made—yet it's not like anything else around right now. If only all American movies were as ordinary as this one.

FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA is a director who no longer allows any incidental pleasures to creep into his movies. In "Tucker: The Man and His Dream"—as in all his pictures since "Apocalypse Now"—he stakes everything on his style. There are no real human beings in "Tucker," no sense of freedom in any of the shots: both people and objects seem overbearingly *designed*, so that everything has a single, programmed significance and nothing is accidental. When Coppola was at his peak, in the "Godfather" movies and "The Conversation," his scenes seemed to vibrate with multiple meanings: our responses to what was on the screen kept shifting, and the movies gave us unusually rich, complex emotional experiences. The way Coppola is working now, whatever complexities and ambiguities we find are not in the material itself but in the relationship between the movie's content and the form that the director has imposed on it. "Tucker" is fascinating in a remote, intellectual way; its design is so bold and strange that we spend a good part of the picture furiously trying to puzzle out what Coppola means by it.

In this movie his creative powers are more fully engaged than they have been in quite a while. The story of Preston Tucker, a Midwestern inventor/entrepreneur who tried, and failed, to manufacture and market an innovative new automobile in the late forties, has fascinated Coppola for a long time. In interviews he speaks as if the career of this visionary, impractical auto manufacturer were a metaphor for his own experience with Zoetrope Studios, an independent studio that Coppola set up, and filled with new filmmaking technology, in the late seventies and dismantled reluctantly a few years later: it had been bankrupted by expensive flops like "One from the Heart."

But even before his studio folded Coppola had announced that he planned to make a version of the Tucker story. Clearly, he responded to something in Tucker's spirit—his energy and optimism, perhaps, or his love of gadgets, or the innocent egotism of his grand belief that he could change the character of American life single-handed (and make a pile of money at it, too)—before he knew that his own great expectations would be similarly disappointed. For whatever reason, the early scenes of "Tucker" are charged with excitement and a genuine affection for the hero and his way of life. It's a *weird* charge, though. This is Coppola's version of Midwestern innocence, movie-derived and romantic. The Tucker family lives in a large, simple white house with a lovely wide porch where children and friendly Dalmatians play. Before sunset, the light is always golden; after dark, the light shining from the windows has its own heartbreaking radiance. (Vittorio Storaro did the cinematography.) Preston (Jeff Bridges), the happy daddy of the clan, is a dreamer and an enthusiast, a big kid. When he announces to his extended family, which includes a couple of mechanics, played by Frederic Forrest and Mako, his plans for the Tucker Torpedo—"The Car of Tomorrow, Today"—it's like a scene from a corny old movie: "Let's make a car right here in the barn!" (There really is a barn, too.)

At first, we think that Coppola is doing something interesting here. The style of "Tucker" is hyped-up forties Hollywood, and we believe—or want to believe—that its intent is ironic, that Coppola is playing, gently, with America's optimistic, movie- and magazine-fuelled vision of itself in the postwar years. We're sure that he means to distance himself from this dream America (as Scorsese did in "New York, New York," which was set in the same period). Several times, scenes that begin as if they were part of the narrative proper turn into sequences from a Tucker Company promotional film; we can't tell the difference, and the movie seems to suggest that Tucker himself can't distinguish between the image he's projecting and the person he really is—that the distinction between the man and his dream has become dangerously fuzzy. And we expect that at some point the style will change, or, at least, modulate—that when Tucker's bold enterprise starts to come apart, undermined by pressure from the government and the big three auto companies, Coppola will drop the old-Hollywood hyperbole, darken the tone a little, do *something* to indicate that the America Tucker believed in never really existed. But nothing changes. The movie remains grandiose and artificial—the same golden lighting, the same low, heroic angles—and it begins to seem completely crazy.

"Tucker" has marvellous moments throughout. Coppola gives the long sequence of Tucker unveiling his first finished car a giddy carnival atmosphere; it's a sensational piece of staging, and the high point of Jeff Bridges' skillful, intelligent performance. And there's a mysteriously hushed scene in which Tucker and his youngest son meet Howard Hughes (the remarkable Dean Stockwell) in a deserted airplane hangar. But the movie collapses in nostalgia, bad faith, and Capra-style populism. Although the script, credited to Arnold Schulman and David Seidler, often suggests a devastating critique of the free-enterprise system, Coppola keeps pulling back from the story's more disturbing implications. In the end, the movie seems as if it had been made by Preston Tucker himself. His style—his "dream," his spirit—is all he has left after the big boys are done with him. He remains the image of the grinning American optimist, and we're not encouraged to consider him a fool for believing that the undiminished fervor of his imagination constitutes some sort of victory. Coppola seems, finally, to have drifted into fantasyland right alongside his hero. It's such a *tame* fantasy, too: a vision of privileged dreamers, geniuses who will inspire us even if their radical notions never really affect our lives materially—even if Tucker's cars never filled the streets, even if Coppola's great movies remain locked up in his head. There's a lot more dream than man in "Tucker." Its remoteness, abstractness, and incorporeality are self-protective, like the safety devices that Tucker put into his car. By the end of the movie, we feel dazed, as if a giant air bag had been inflated to protect us from coming in contact with anything real.

—TERRENCE RAFFERTY

London Theatre News

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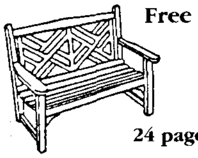

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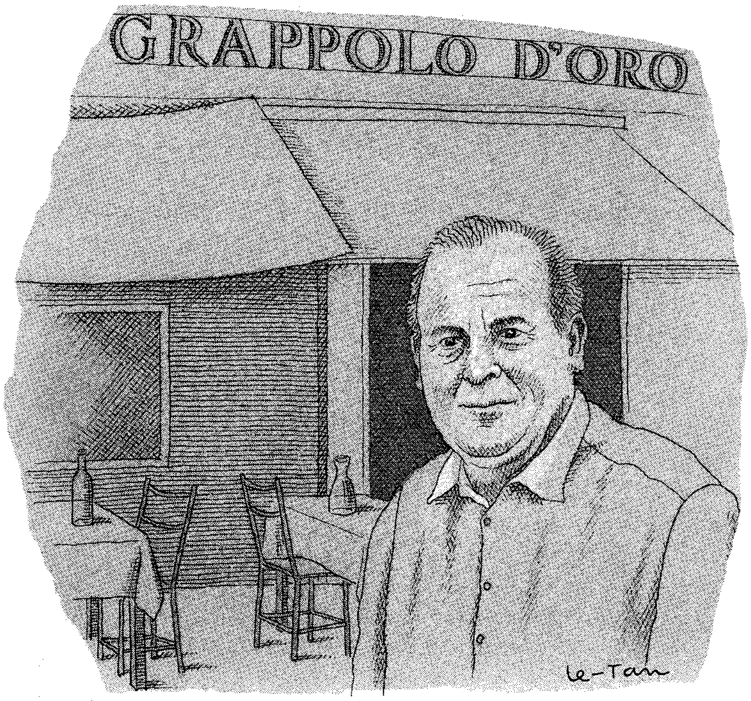
LETTER FROM ROME

THE early-morning sounds of the street in Rome where Andrea d'Angelo works are as familiar to his ears as the voices of his wife and children. There are, first of all, the intonations of the people in the quarter, quintessentially Roman in character—calls of greeting and instruction; jokes; friendly insults; warnings to small children on their way to school; imprecations upon the fates, the weather, the authorities, the deities who are supposed to watch over daily events but too often fail to do so. These very human utterances, couched most frequently in the harsh, nasal accents of larynges nurtured largely on wine, pasta, bread, and cheese, and aged by overuse to a fine, mellow tone of bellowed insouciance, rise like a chorus from the cobblestones outside Andrea's establishment, a trattoria called Il Grappolo d'Oro.



From the moment Andrea arrives to begin his working day at the Grappolo, which is situated on the Piazza della Cancelleria, in one of the oldest quarters of the *centro storico*, these voices never entirely cease, even in midafternoon, when many Romans take a *pisolino*, an hour's rest, to digest their food and refresh themselves for an assault on the second half of the day; always, somewhere, someone will be calling, either to summon a child to duty or to bewail the failure of some project or simply to assert the validity of a claim to someone else's attention. "A-a-a-ah, Mario-o-oh, what are you doing? . . . A-o-o-oh! You think I'm stupid? . . . E-e-eh! But who's this here? Come here, beauty! . . . A vision! A miracle! Listen, Elena, now I'll tell you! Cretina! . . . Hurry up, *stupido*, we're dying of hunger here! . . . *Mah!* They can kill you, what do you care? . . . Listen to him, will you? A mountain of lies, not a word of truth . . . A-o-o-oh, but what's happening? But what is this, the end of the world? . . ." The shouted sentiments punctuate Andrea's day, but so familiarly that most of the time he doesn't even hear them. They merely act as an acoustical background to cushion the rhythm of his labors. Without them, he would undoubtedly begin to question his presence there, perhaps even the reality of his existence.

The voices are not the only sounds from the street. There are, of course, other familiar noises of the quarter at work—windows and doors opening and closing, shutters banging, objects falling on or being dragged across the cobblestones, chairs scraping over pavements, the screech of metal screens raised and lowered by local shopkeepers as they open and close their establishments in concert with the passing hours. These are the sounds Andrea has heard all of his working days, not only on this street but on all the streets and piazzas he has labored in for the past forty-three years, ever since he first came to the city.

If he doesn't hear them as well now, if he fails to individualize them anymore, it is not only familiarity that has dulled his senses. The tapestry of small, human voices and familiar activities which once compiled the whole of Andrea's aural connection to his world has been destroyed by the internal-combustion engine, which has dominated the air since the mid-nineteen-fifties, when Rome all but disappeared beneath the tidal wave of automobiles that began to wash over the peninsula.

The Grappolo d'Oro is in a heavily travelled part of town, so that the dominant sound of the whole quarter has become the roar of engines of all sizes and types, at the service of citizens for whom ownership of a motor vehicle is synonymous with material well-being. Andrea himself drives to work every day from his home in the Tiburtina quarter, about five miles away, and parks as close to the front door of his restaurant as he can. His car, a tiny white Fiat Fiorino, is only one of dozens parked in the immediate area, many of them illegally, and it now seems as natural to him to drive to work in a honking mass of cars and trucks through the twisting streets of old Rome as it once did to walk or to ride his bicycle, when he was young and just starting out. Ordinarily, it should take no more than fifteen minutes to drive from his house to the restaurant, but often, especially in the morning rush hour, it will take him about an hour of agonizing bumper-to-bumper maneuvering to get there. And by the time he arrives, he often complains, his ears are accustomed only to traffic noises, his senses dulled to merely human life.

I once discussed this problem of the automobile with Andrea over a *grappa* late one night at a table in the back of the restaurant. I pointed out to him that every day the local news, the so-called *cronaca di Roma*, on the inside pages of the newspapers, was dominated by accounts of accidents in which citizens had been maimed or killed by the automobile. The letters columns were full of protests about traffic abuses. People wanted to know why the municipality's tow trucks weren't more diligent in removing cars parked in hospital entrances, on narrow streets where they blocked the passage of buses, on sidewalks, even on the steps of churches. Why, readers of the *cronaca* demanded, should the huge, air-conditioned sight-seeing buses full of tourists be allowed to obscure the city's most famous monuments? How were people supposed to get in and out of their front doors or their places of business without having to scramble like mountain goats over vehicles jammed side by side in every available, if often illegal, space?

I reminded Andrea that walking had been one of the traditional pleasures of daily life in Rome. He and I had arrived in the city within a year and a half of each other, he in late 1945 and I in the spring of 1947, when Italy had barely begun to recover from the hardships of the war years and the German and Allied occupations. There were trolley cars in service, including a line, the *circolare*, that encircled the inner city, bounded in part by the Aurelian Wall, and there were electric buses, linked umbilically to overhead power lines, that snaked through various sections, although the current often failed and was periodically shut off for hours at a time. A few gasoline-powered monsters roared along the Corso and other main arteries, but the best way to get around the *centro* then was by hopping on and off *camioncini*, rickety jitneys, some of them powered by sputtering motorcycle engines, whose owners had improvised and/or appropriated routes through the city, thus making it possible to get from one quarter to another. Otherwise, people travelled on foot or by bicycle. Few citizens had private cars, and these disappeared at night, hidden away behind locked gates and high walls. Public transport stopped soon after nightfall, taxis were very scarce, and by 11 P.M. the city had emptied itself of vehicles. The great piazzas and monuments and ruins basked serenely under dim street lamps, and I remember long evenings of late-night conversations with friends at various outdoor cafés, after which we would stroll home through silent streets, the only noise the sound of our footsteps on the cobblestones. I now recall that period of my life as an enchanted time.

"And what were you doing then?" Andrea asked.

I had spent part of my childhood in Rome, I informed him, and I had come back to live in Italy after the war, mainly to study music. I wanted to become an opera singer.

"Ah, then you were not working," he said.

"I was studying."

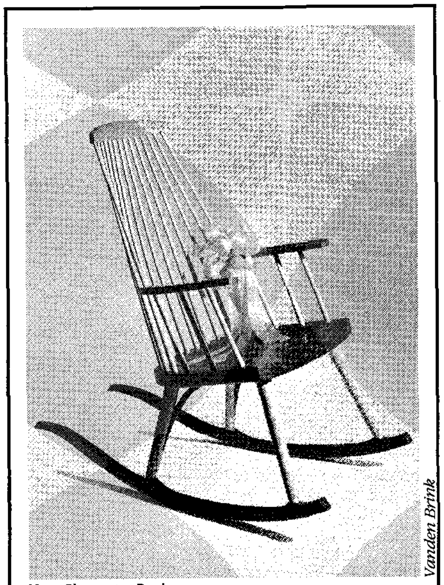
He nodded, as if trying to imagine what my life had been like compared with his own. "Luckily, I did not have to walk far," he said. "And then for a while I had a bicycle."

I began to understand that the prospect of walking anywhere or riding in a crowded bus would not seem attractive to a man who had spent most of his life on his feet. The complaints and debates raging in the *cronaca* left Andrea indifferent. "It is a small but comfortable car, and I can listen to my portable radio," he said. "I also use it to shop for the restaurant." The automobile, I realized, was not a source of inconvenience and needless expense to him; it had become a symbol of his achievement and his status in society.

ANDREA has lived in the Tiburtina for thirty years. The quarter is named after the old Roman road that Emperor Hadrian used to journey to and from his famous villa at Tivoli, northeast of the city. Andrea settled in the Tiburtina because the road also leads to his home town of Amatrice, a rural center in the hills of northern Lazio, almost on the border of the mountainous region of the Abruzzi.

For some reason, most of the best cooks in Rome come either from Umbria, a region north of the city, or from the Abruzzi. Amatrice is full of good cooks—Andrea's father was one, too—and has given its name to one of Italy's better pasta dishes, spaghetti *bucatini all'amatriciana* (or, in corrupted form, *alla matriciana*). The town also has a so-called dancing tower, which oscillates a foot and a half or more when its powerful bells ring out the hours. The hills surrounding it were, according to legend, once populated by witches, who could be observed on Saturday nights holding diabolical meetings and cavorting about the countryside. Otherwise, Amatrice has not much to recommend it, according to Andrea. It is a sleepy, provincial place with little industry and, as in most areas of the south, much unemployment.

Although Andrea had relatives in Amatrice, for many years he seldom returned there, except for occasional holiday visits. He had no car, and it wasn't easy then to travel to and fro by bus or train. Also, he was working very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long hours and had little time off. When he moved to the Tiburtina, however, it comforted him to feel that he was living in a part of Rome that could be said to be on the way back to his place of origin. At that time, much of the quarter was still open countryside, and it was not like living in a big city at all. Parts of the area were even without electricity and water, and there were many squatters—fugitives from the poverty of the provinces who had come to Rome to find work and couldn't afford to live anywhere else. "When my husband brought me to live here in 1934, it was terrible," one old woman recently recalled in the *cronaca* of a Rome daily. "The tears ran every other minute. People said to me, 'You'll see, you'll get used to it.' In fact, I did get used to it. I've become a fighter."

By the late nineteen-fifties, the quarter had begun to explode with the blocks of large apartment houses, thrown up practically overnight, that distinguished the unbridled building boom of the period. The Tiburtina flowered into a postwar *borgata*, an outlying residential area, in which the red, pink, and yellow palazzi seemed to be tumbled on top of one another without reason and in violation of all laws requiring adequate public space, roads, schools, and parks. To the writer Pier Paolo Pasolini, who described the Tiburtina of that time in his novel "Una Vita Violenta," the whole quarter "looked really like Jerusalem, with that mass of slabs, one on top of the other, aligned over the fields, against the old quarries and glaring in the full light of the sun."

About twenty-five thousand people now live in the Tiburtina, giving it a population density that is one of the highest in the city. Andrea and his wife, Marcella, a Roman woman whom he met while working in a restaurant, own an apartment in one of the newer palazzi, with adequate air and light, and enough room to have raised their two children, Maria, twenty-eight, and Paolo, twenty-two, in comfort. By the time the d'Angelos settled in the Tiburtina, the worst of Andrea's early struggles to survive in Rome were over, and they were relatively well off. For others in the quarter, memories of life there in the early years are bitter; it was a place to escape from. "It is still a ghetto and it's difficult to get yourself out of it," commented a young woman who grew up there and recently moved away. "It's a mark that remains stuck to you all your life."

UNTIL I met Andrea, I had never known anyone who lived in a *borgata*. Part of my childhood had been spent on the streets and in the parks of the *centro storico*, where my Roman relatives and ancestors on my mother's side of the family had lived all their lives. My earliest memories of Rome were of various houses and apartments, all with gardens and terraces from which one could look out over the city, with its scores of church cupolas and its hillsides peppered with private villas and stands of umbrella pines. Always, I remember, the focus of my gaze, especially from the rooftop terrace of my grandmother's apartment, would be the dome of St. Peter's, which seemed to soar hugely out of the earth, as if summoned to appear by the force of longing it represented. I could never have imagined living in Rome and not being within sight of it, or, for that matter, within a short distance of the Castel Sant'Angelo, the Campidoglio, the Colosseum, the ancient forums, and all the other famous ruins that had become neighborhood landmarks to me.

Later, when I came back to Rome as an aspiring tenor, after a gap of fourteen years during which I lived mainly in New York, it would never have occurred to me to settle anywhere but in the *centro*. A few of my relatives, including my aunts Lea and Franca, my mother's younger sisters, had by then moved into newer neighborhoods, where the streets were wider and lined with the sort of comfortable, middle-class apartment houses I had become used to in Manhattan. I couldn't understand why they had done so. The very heart of old Rome was where I wanted to be, and during that period of nearly five years, when I remained uninterruptedly in the city, I lived in various rooms or shared cramped quarters somewhere in the ancient *rioni*, or wards, on both sides of the Tiber. Wherever I happened to be, it was always within easy walking distance of the Rome I knew and loved best, a triangular cobweb of streets and alleys, piazzas, baroque churches, Renaissance palazzi, and ancient stone houses anchored by the Piazza del Popolo, Santa Maria in Trastevere, and the Colosseum. And for the past thirty-five years, during almost all of which I've managed to spend at least several weeks and occasionally months at a time in the city, I've followed the same pattern, whether staying with relatives and friends or in one of the small hotels in the area between the Spanish Steps and the Pantheon.

It was only in the late nineteen-fifties that I became aware of the *borgate* as a social phenomenon. Italy was in the midst of a tremendous industrial boom, and the *borgate*, in all their hideousness and squalor, at least represented a break from the old, stratified order of things. Italians of the new middle class, acquiring their first cars, refrigerators, and television sets, not only couldn't find adequate housing in the older sections of their cities but often actually preferred living in these modern neighborhoods, where the plumbing worked and the air was cleaner and the countryside was only minutes away. If none of the people I had grown up with and cared about happened to live in the *borgate*, this was simply because they hadn't had to fight their way up from the bottom.

During the nineteen-sixties, my aunt Franca and her husband occupied a large, rambling flat at one end of the Campo dei Fiori, a piazza in the middle of the old papal city through which travellers passed on their way to the Vatican and which today is still the site of a daily open-air market that traces its origins back to the ancient Roman Republic. It is also near a number of other famous landmarks, such as the

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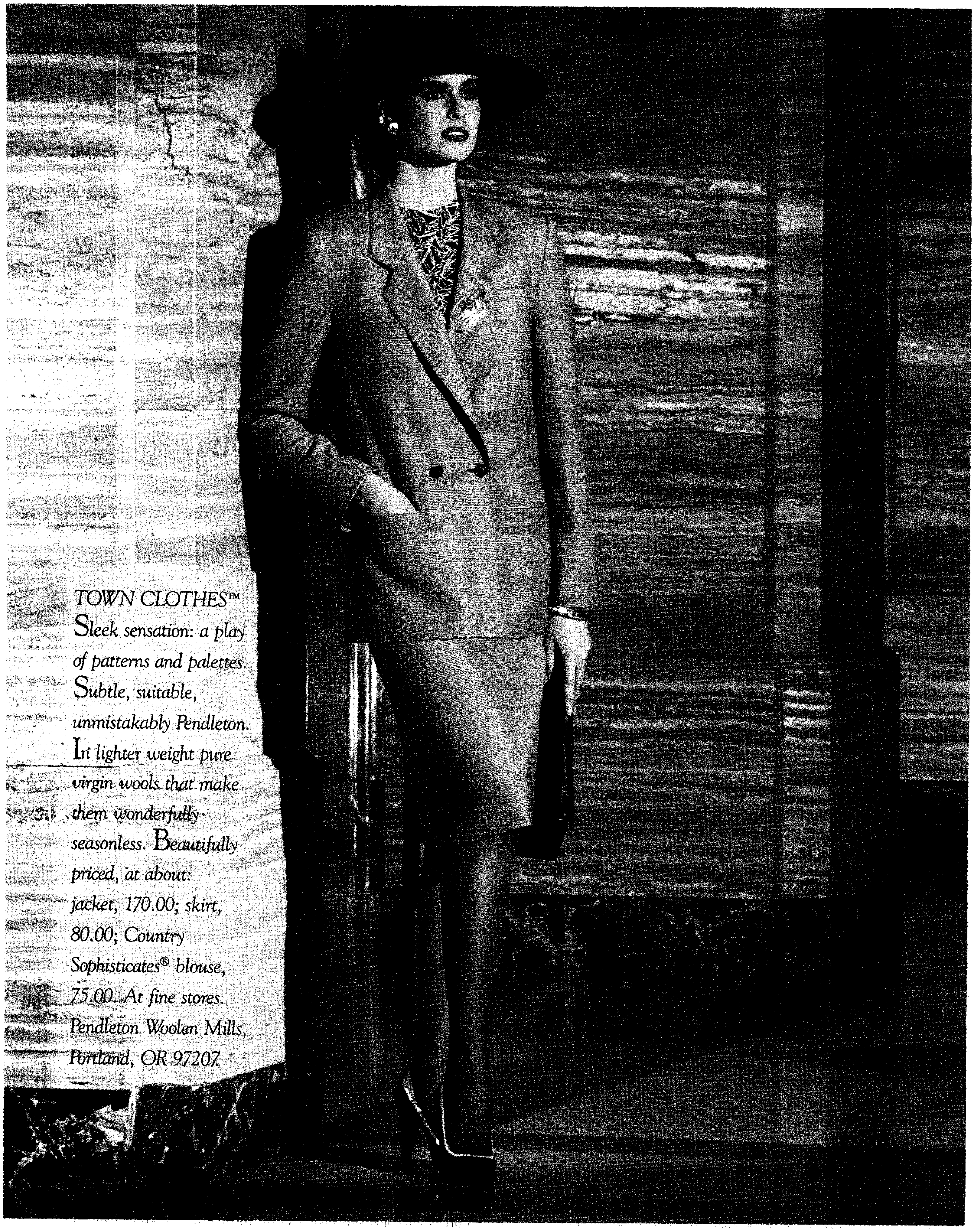

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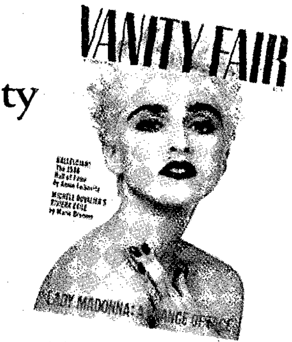

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VANITY FAIR

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Palazzo Farnese, the Piazza Navona, and the Palazzo della Cancelleria, once the home of the papal chancellery and still housing several ecclesiastical courts. From time to time, I would eat out in the area, which teems with small restaurants, wine bars, and cafés, and it was thus that I happened to discover the Grappolo d'Oro.

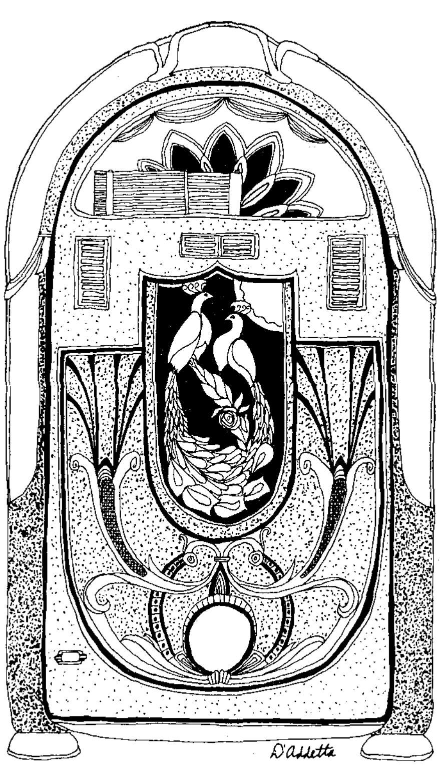
THE Palazzo della Cancelleria, built in the late fifteenth century and long regarded as one of the most beautiful Renaissance palaces in the city, quite naturally dominates its surroundings. In fact, it occupies one whole side, the head, of the T-shaped piazza named after it. The Grappolo d'Oro is in an ancient, thick-walled apartment building on the stem of the T. The ground-floor premises are flanked by stores selling leather goods and automobile spare parts. Directly across the way is another very old building, with an antique store and a beauty parlor fronting on the street. The stem, one block long, is one of the oldest thoroughfares in Rome, only a short distance from the Campo dei Fiori.

When Andrea and his two partners, Carlo Maggi and Alvaro Renzi, took over the Grappolo, in 1966, it was a local *osteria*, to which the old men of the neighborhood came to play cards, drink Frascati, and munch on typical Roman dishes—*pagnotelle*, pizza, *panini*, veal stews, tripe. They sat at plain wooden tables in the dark, talking and joking for hours. "When we came," Carlo explained not long ago, "we cleaned everybody out, like cowboys and Indians." The intention of the new partners was to convert the *osteria* into more than just a neighborhood hangout. "We wished to raise it to a more acceptable level, a true trattoria that would draw clients from all parts of the city, as well as the foreigners."

The location was an excellent one, next door to many of Rome's best-known tourist stamping grounds, and the premises consisted of two good-sized main rooms under handsome beamed ceilings, with a kitchen at the back and an enormous cellar for storage. In addition, during the warm months it would be possible to put half a dozen tables on the cobblestones outside, where customers could gaze at the austerely elegant travertine façade of the Cancelleria.

The three partners had known each other for years. Andrea and Carlo, who comes from L'Aquila, in the Abruzzi, met when they were both eighteen and working as waiters in a small restaurant off the Piazza Barberini, in the commercial center of Rome. They had begun at thirteen as dishwashers and then worked their way up from one job to another all over the city. Soon after they met, they began to talk about having their own restaurant one day, but at the time the dream seemed a distant one. In fact, two years later, Carlo emigrated to Venezuela, where he spent the next decade, still working in restaurants and saving as much money as possible in order to return.

Meanwhile, Andrea went on with his career in Rome. By the time Carlo came back from South America, in 1961, Andrea had become the manager of a trattoria and had also met Alvaro, who was a few years older and equally experienced in the business. The three men now decided to pool their resources and to look for their own place. Andrea had worked, in one capacity or another, in more than sixty restaurants, and there was very little he didn't know about the day-to-day operations of the business. It was the only real education he had ever had. "I left school in the fifth grade, when I was thirteen and a half," he recently recalled. "It was 1945, the war was just over, and there was more hunger than schools. My family sent me to the city to learn the business." He slept at first in a room with five other young men who were also in search of work or just starting out. "It was difficult," he continued, "always with very long hours and almost no time to do anything else."



Whenever he talks about it now, it is as if he had never had any choice in the matter, and he cannot imagine his or anyone else's children wanting to make a career out of the restaurant business. "No one likes it," he has said. "Your life is sacrificed to it." What little time he does have to himself is spent with his family. His daughter Maria is married, has a child, and works part time as a bookkeeper. She and her husband, who is a technical director for a large international manufacturing concern, live in the same building as Andrea, on the same floor. His son Paolo recently completed his obligatory military service and has gone back to school; he is still living at home. "This means Marcella can go on keeping an eye on all of us," Andrea said not long ago. "There is an old proverb in Italy: 'I am the boss, but the person who commands is my wife.' "

FROM the moment I first walked into the Grappolo d'Oro, sometime during the summer of 1968, it became one of my favorite hangouts. It was then a typical, very modest Roman trattoria, with paper tablecloths and bare walls, but the atmosphere was friendly and the food simple yet superb. It was also cheap, and had been discovered by tourists wandering about the area, taking in the sights. They came early and sat outside in the warm weather, eating pasta and drinking white wine from the *castelli* in the Alban hills. At nine o'clock, when the Italians started to arrive, the Grappolo would begin to fill up, and by ten there would be bunches of people standing around, sometimes in the aisles, waiting to be seated. The word on good, reasonably priced food goes out very quickly in Rome, and restaurants like the Grappolo soon acquire a large core of devotees, who eat there at least once or twice a week.

My earliest memories of Rome, in fact, are inextricably enmeshed with recollections of wonderful meals. The women in my family were all fine cooks, and, even in New York, I grew up eating the sort of food only the finest

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Italian restaurants in the United States can approximate. When I went back to Rome after the war, it seemed perfectly natural to be eating inexpensively in establishments such as the Grappolo d'Oro, where every dish was prepared to provide not merely nourishment but pleasure. The term "fast food" had not even been coined, and the Italians I knew considered American cooking to be an atrocity, comparable to the bland cuisine of the English, a race famous throughout the peninsula for its insensitivity to all aspects of material well-being. A meal in Rome, even in the middle of a working day, was an experience to be savored and lingered over, for at least two or three hours, after which one went home for a snooze behind closed shutters before going back to work. At night, long after the tourists had departed for their hotels and pensiones, the Grappolo would remain busy, sometimes until nearly midnight, with tables of diners reluctant to abandon the source of such contentment and still nibbling on cheeses, fruit, and *dolci*, sipping Frascati, sweet *vino santo*, or a liqueur. Afterward, the talk would be about food—discussions about the quality of the fish, the tenderness of the veal, the freshness of the mozzarella (I have a friend who won't eat a mozzarella more than six hours old), the success or failure of a particular recipe, all carried on with the intensity of a political debate. Good cooking in a Roman trattoria is not merely a necessity but a philosophical imperative.

Nevertheless, it is unusual to hear anyone in Rome speak well of a particular restaurant. Even the regulars at a favorite haunt will seldom praise it. A couple of years ago, after an absence of several months, I was discussing the Grappolo with a Roman crony of mine. We had just finished eating there with a party of friends, and I had expressed satisfaction that standards had not been lowered while I was away. My friend disagreed. "It's not the same," he said, and proceeded to complain that a pasta serving he had recently ordered had not been cooked al dente and that twice in the past two weeks his favorite dish, *penne all'arrabbiata*, had not been spicy enough. He also commented that he had been finding less variety in the offerings on the antipasto table. I observed that he must have been eating there regularly, as often as two or three times a week. He shrugged. "What do you expect?" he said. "It's not what it was, but it's not bad." I stopped worrying. "Not bad" is a term of encomium in Rome.

ONCE a week, either on Tuesday or on Friday, Andrea has to get up before five o'clock in the morning and drive to the great wholesale and produce market of Rome, which is situated in the Testaccio, not far from the Porta San Paolo and the Aurelian Wall, to the west of the inner city. (He and Carlo take turns at this chore, as did Alvaro until his death in an automobile accident, ten years ago.) There he spends several hours buying much of the food that the Grappolo will serve during the next few days. The scene is chaotic and the haggling over prices foulmouthed and nerve-racking. Andrea does not allow any of it to affect him personally; it is simply another reality of his life that he has learned to accept and make the best of. "I don't fight with anyone," he explained one morning, after an exchange of insults with a fishmonger which had seemed potentially lethal. "We play-fight, we pretend. Otherwise, it is a waste of time, yours and theirs."

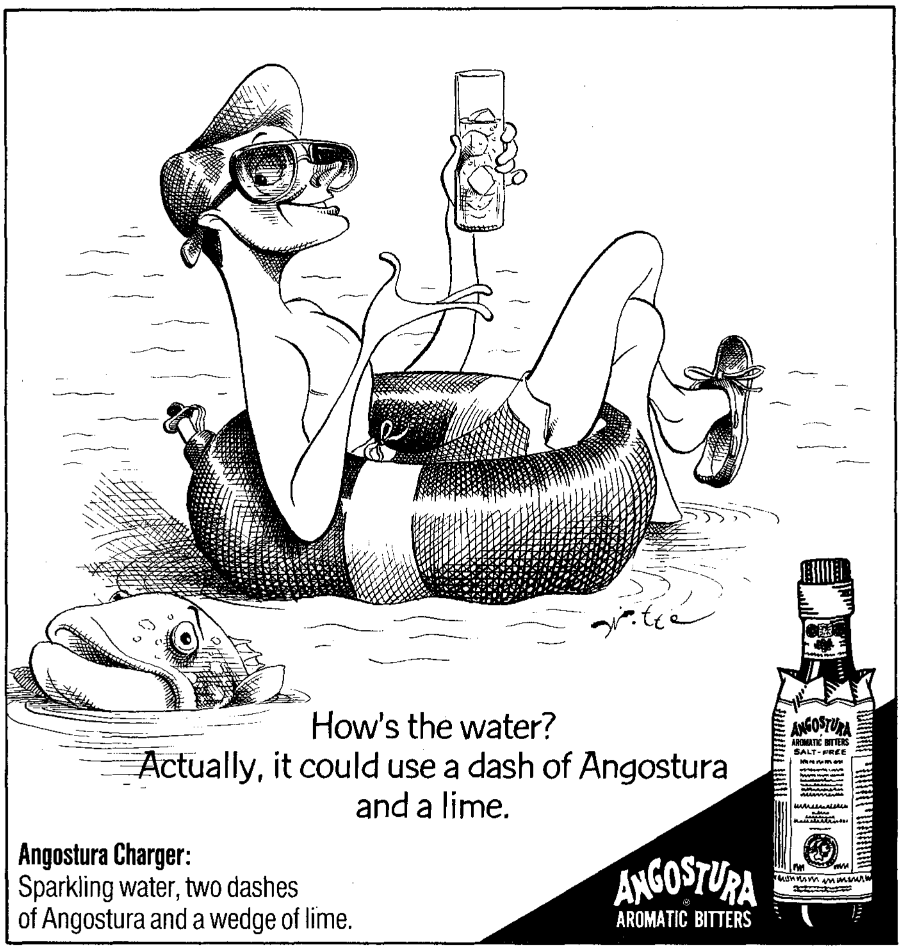
Who would want to fight with Andrea? He has essentially a sweet, gentle temperament that is reflected in a readiness to smile and joke, but his body exudes brute strength. He is five feet eleven, with brown hair and dark-brown eyes, and he looks older than his fifty-five years, but his arms and shoulders are massive, his head thrust forward as if he could launch himself like a battering ram at whatever might choose to challenge him or stand in his way. Carlo, too, has the arms and shoulders of a weight lifter. Once, a few years ago, a party of visiting German journalists caused considerable trouble in the restaurant. The men had drunk too much wine and had become involved in an altercation with some Americans seated at a table behind them. Voices were raised, chairs scraped back, the decks cleared for action. The appearance from the kitchen of Carlo and Andrea—quite benign-looking but obviously ready to intervene—quickly smoothed matters over. No outbreak of actual violence has ever marred the premises of the Grappolo.

Rome, as a whole, has never been a violent city. Thieves break into houses, steal automobiles, snatch purses, and lift wallets. Bandits hold up jewelry stores and theatre box offices. Drug addicts and pushers infest the streets, piazzas, and parks of certain areas, most notably in Trastevere and the poorer quarters. Murders, however, are rare, each one an event worthy of headlines and, especially if the crime involves a jilted lover, follow-up stories in the *cronaca*, perhaps even cautionary editorials on the lamentable decay in public morals. Rape is rarer still, and kidnapping for ransom, a favorite crime in the south, has all but ceased.

During the nineteen-seventies, the so-called Years of Lead, Rome, like every other large Italian city, was the site of numerous atrocities perpetrated by the Red Brigades and other terrorist groups. There were also frequent riots on the streets and piazzas, largely caused by confrontations between gangs of hoodlums of the left and right. Shopkeepers and restaurant owners simply pulled their metal shutters down and rode out the disturbances. It's undoubtedly a comment of sorts on the Roman attitude toward food that no popular eating place was ever invaded and smashed up. It is also a well-known fact that in Rome rallies, marches, and riots never seem to take place at mealtimes.

Nevertheless, Andrea and Carlo have occasionally felt obliged to shut down whenever some sort of demonstration lapped too close to their front door. The Piazza Navona and the Campo dei Fiori are frequently the sites of large political and protest rallies, and the action sometimes overflows into the area of the Cancelleria. Today, the trouble comes mainly from gangs of teen-agers and young people, most of them unemployed, who roar past on motorcycles or settle in large, noisy groups in various favorite haunts, such as the Piazza Farnese, the Piazza Navona, and around the Pantheon. They are considered to be a rabble of delinquents by many of their elders, even though they are mostly harmless. The public telephone in the Grappolo, like many all over town, carries a permanent out-of-order sign, even though it works perfectly. "We don't want the hippies in here" is Andrea's explanation.

ON a recent warm, sunny morning, Andrea arrived at the Grappolo d'Oro at his usual hour of about eight o'clock. Carlo, a bachelor who lives in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an apartment around the corner from the restaurant, had preceded him by a few minutes and had opened up; he had already cleaned the ice chest to the left of the front door, where the day's fresh fish would be displayed. The chairs were stacked on the tables, and a tall, thin young man with dark hair and thick glasses was sweeping up. In the back, the two cooks were already laboring over steaming kettles and saucepans, their round, soft, pale faces beaded with sweat; they both suffer from sinusitis, the occupational hazard of Roman cooks, who work usually in damp, hot kitchens from which they emerge either into dust and heat or into the chill air of the cooler months. They are neither of them happy men, though cooks are the best paid of all restaurant employees, with individual earnings equivalent to over two thousand dollars a month. Andrea, especially, keeps close tabs on them, and can, in a pinch, fill in himself. "If, after forty-three years, I couldn't cook . . ." he once said, ending the sentence with the eloquent shrug of a man who has seen many chefs, the prima donnas of the trade, come and go.

There are not so many jobs, even for good cooks, that the turnover these days is large. In addition to these two and the young man sweeping up, the Grappolo employs only two others, the waiters, one of whom is Andrea's nephew. (On weekends, Paolo sometimes helps out.) Andrea and Carlo have often talked about hiring more people, especially during the summer months, when they could use the extra help to serve the customers eating outside, but they have never been able to afford it. "In Italy, everything is bureaucracy," Andrea explained. "From the moment you give work to someone, you are at the mercy of the government—taxes, social security, medical insurance. Worst of all, it is almost impossible to fire anyone. You must pay a liquidation fee, which can amount in some cases to millions of lire." This system, he maintained, was making it impossible for the young to find work, because there is no such thing in Italy as temporary employment. "People can be hired and paid illegally, in cash only," Andrea continued, "but it is dangerous. What if they denounce you to the labor unions or the tax officials?" There were about a hundred and fifty thousand young people out of work in Rome at the time, and the situation was worse elsewhere, especially in the south. "There is work, always, for those who really want to work," Andrea insisted, "but certainly it is not easy."

In addition to the daily work at the restaurant, almost every day Carlo and Andrea have to augment their supplies in the Campo dei Fiori, particularly at the height of the tourist season. They are familiar figures to the venders behind their stalls of fresh fish, vegetables, cheeses, and meats, and they move about the piazza buying kilos of lettuce, asparagus, eggplant, and beans from the Roman countryside, strawberries from Terracina, peppers and oranges from Sicily, with a nod, a hand gesture, a quick exchange of amiable insults. ("This one screws me all the time," Carlo said one day, when I was trailing him about the piazza. He was referring to a beaming, leathery-looking, middle-aged woman, who was hovering protectively over mountains of lettuce and artichokes. "U-u-uh," she replied, a hand slapping at the air in protest, "he makes my ear whistle with his lies.") No one tries to con them into buying produce that is not quite fresh or fish more than a day old or chicken a bit too scrawny, because it would be a waste of time. These men can tell at a glance what is worth the money and what isn't; their living depends on it. "We've been doing this so long, it's like breathing," Carlo said.

Inside the Grappolo itself, the early part of the morning is spent preparing the day's vegetables and fruit at a wooden table Andrea calls "the torture rack." The work is done with a long, thin, very sharp knife that Andrea refers to as his eleventh finger, which has, he points out, "already ruined the other ten." His hands as well as Carlo's are blunt-fingered, callused, scarred, stained dark from the leaves and juices of raw plants. The two men work in silence, with the casual, swift expertise of dancers at an exercise bar.

They shear away the outer leaves of the artichokes, peel the stems, and punch in the chokes with a thumb jab. They trim the strawberries, then soak them in water and vinegar. They cut off the thick ends of the asparagus stems, scrape the sand away, then tie them into bundles for the pot. They slice mushrooms, chopping down on them as briskly and efficiently as a machine, making a sound like the hammering of carpet tacks into soft wood. On an average day at this time of year, the Grappolo will serve between ten and fifteen kilos of pasta, thirty to forty artichokes, three kilos of asparagus, a couple of dozen popular fish—turbot, dentex, flounder, gilthead, bass. Every day, between sixty and eighty mostly contented people will come, eat, and leave, unaware of the effort being made, the price being paid—and why should they care? It's not their business, after all; they have their own affairs to worry about.

THE constantly rising cost of everything is the affliction Italians complain about endlessly, but it is not the only one. Rome, like every other major city in the world, has become not only expensive but a difficult place to live comfortably. In addition to an inadequate public-transportation system, which is periodically crippled by strikes and slowdowns, and the impossible traffic that Romans must cope with, everyone agrees that the air in the *centro storico*, with its narrow cobblestoned streets and alleys hemmed in by ancient palazzi, has become almost unbreathable. And the noise levels at all hours of the day and night are among the highest in the world. "Living in Rome today is like being compelled to attend an endless rock concert," an American resident of many years recently remarked. "We're all going deaf, which may not be a bad thing."

Trattorias like the Grappolo d'Oro flourish as small havens in this maelstrom of daily life. Romans have always liked to eat out, and a meal in any restaurant is a social occasion. It is also no more expensive to eat out than in; one of the peculiarities of life in this city is that it often costs more to shop for one's groceries than to have them prepared and served up in a public establishment. This is because there is a considerable disparity between the prices paid at the wholesale level in the general markets and those the public confronts in the retail stores, which are subject to all sorts of taxes not imposed upon the owners of restaurants. "Even when private citizens pull in their belts," a Roman dealer in salamis and cold cuts declared in the *cronaca* not long ago, "the public powers land violently heavy blows."

When I was living in Rome some years ago with my wife and small children, we made a determined attempt to eat at home regularly, mainly because we felt that eating out as often as we had been was not conducive to a healthy family life. We were soon disabused of that notion. My wife was spending half of every day shopping (this was before the advent of the *supermercato*, a relatively recent phenomenon in Rome), and it was costing us more to eat at home than in a restaurant. Also, my children loved the noisy conviviality of the Roman trattorias we liked to frequent, and they enjoyed being fussed over by the waiters, all of whom seemed to be capable of ecstasy at the mere sight of hungry children. We soon resumed our routine of dining out several times a week in one favorite spot or another, and the experience turned my children into connoisseurs of good cooking.

It was during this period that my wife and I paid a courtesy call on an old friend of my family whom I'll call Count Fabio Traversi. He was an elegant Roman aristocrat, who lived in a gloomy apartment on the Aventine Hill. He received us with kindly, old-fashioned graciousness. A tiny, wizened Sardinian maid, who, he informed us, had been with him for thirty-five years, offered tea and cookies from an elaborate silver service that was clearly a family heirloom. The talk, as it often does in Rome, soon settled on the subject of rising costs and food, as well as on the increasing scarcity of good cooks to ease one's way through life. Three cooks had recently come and gone in the Count's service, and he now found it necessary to eat out more frequently. It was too expensive to employ a cook, he told us, what with all the new labor laws, the unions, taxes, and social benefits one had to deal with.

I tried to strike a positive note. After all, I argued, Italy was in the middle of an economic boom. Working people now had a chance not only to earn decent wages but to acquire material goods they had never dreamed of owning before. They also had a right to be protected by all the new social programs the postwar democratic governments had instituted after the fall of Fascism.

The Count sighed. "Ah, *caro* Bill, you are so right," he said, "but, you see, wherever social justice occurs, there life becomes a little less gracious."

BY noon, the Grappolo d'Oro begins to look pleasing to the eye. The straight-backed, cane-seated wooden chairs have been set in place, and clean white tablecloths lie over dark-red undercloths; short-stemmed wineglasses gleam in the soft light. The day's offering of fresh fish shines on its bed of bright-green yucca leaves. On the walls hang landscapes and still-lifes by a friend of Andrea, the Roman painter Franco Mazzilli, who also designed the frieze of vines and grape clusters, executed in dark terra-cotta tiles, which rings the walls. Beyond the three rows of tables in the main room is the buffet counter, now being heaped high with cold hors d'oeuvres—serving plates of spicy salami, artichokes *alla Romana*, vegetable *frittate*, sweet-and-sour onions, beans, shellfish, eggplant cooked in several different ways, mushrooms, asparagus, chicory, beet greens, spinach, eggs mayonnaise, fresh sardines, bowls of fruit. Shelves crowded with wine bottles rise above the counter, framing the entrance to the kitchen.

On a small blackboard set above the buffet and facing the room, Andrea chalks in the day's menu:

Spaghetti con vongole
Risotto alla pescatora
Ravioli, ricotta e spinaci
Tortellini al sugo
Pesce alla griglia
Abbacchio alla cacciatora
Zucchini ripieni di carne
Vitello al forno
Bocconcini di tacchino
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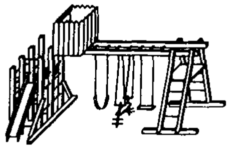
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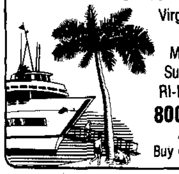
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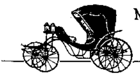
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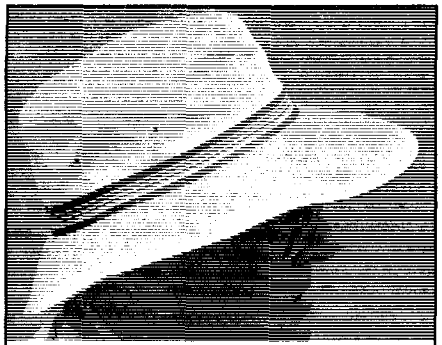

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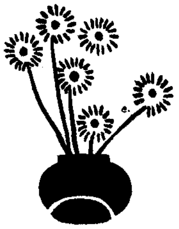
attempt is made to translate any of these terms. Andrea feels that the language of food is international. "The table is sacred," he says, implying that the integrity of what the Grappolo d'Oro offers cannot be compromised to suit the needs of the itinerant, unlettered diner.

It is this attitude that has made Italians in general, and especially those in Rome and to the south, intolerant of foreign cooking. They feel no need to sample any other cuisine but their own, and not until the late sixties did the French, Chinese, and Japanese begin to open establishments all over town. Even today, these places are patronized mainly by foreigners, and only occasionally by the Romans themselves. During a visit, some years ago, to a newly opened Chinese restaurant on the roof of a building just off the Via Veneto, I asked the waiter about several of the dishes listed on the menu. He was a middle-aged Roman dressed in a mandarin costume with a little round hat perched on his head like a soup plate. He looked at me in horror. "How do I know?" he said. "You don't think I eat this stuff?"



Andrea himself has never eaten in a Chinese restaurant. Nor does he have the time to enjoy his own cooking. He, Carlo, and their staff have lunch together every day at eleven-thirty. They eat quickly and in silence. All that these people have had to say to each other has long since been said. By noon, a very early hour for the luncheon crowd in Rome, the trattoria is ready for its first clients, who at that time of day will almost certainly be tourists. Andrea stands by the buffet counter, a napkin over his left arm. He is like an actor in a long-running play, no longer really interested in the action but ready to assume his part, every speech and every move of the role so deeply ingrained in him that he could not possibly miss a cue, a line, or a piece of business, even if he wanted to. "I am tied here," he once said, "by need and the weight of years."

ONE of the great pleasures of coming back to Rome year after year is the expectation of finding things unchanged, the people and locales one loves still here. For many years, I never had to buy a new address book, because the one I'd acquired in 1947 remained serviceable. Foreigners came and went, but my Roman friends and relatives mostly stayed put. Only during the past few years, with the loosening of old rent-control laws and the soaring of real-estate values in the *centro*, have I noticed many changes. Still, it's a comfort to return and to find so much of the city as it was when I last left it and as it has been, in some cases, for centuries. The great monuments and piazzas and the ancient, winding streets still retain their character and their comforting, reassuring identities, even when all but overwhelmed by the metallic clatter of the automobile. And for me, as the years have passed, one of my favorite points of reference has become the Grappolo d'Oro, to which I now return, happy to find it as fixed as the paving stones of the city itself.

Historical commemorations are common in Rome, and every spring, beginning in May, the city begins to celebrate its own existence. One section after another comes alive with some special manifestation designed to lure shoppers, tourists, and the merely curious. Along the Via dei Coronari, only a few blocks from the Cancelleria, the merchants of antiques and objets d'art stay open until midnight for a week, their shops illuminated by torches set into the walls of the narrow street, which is closed to traffic by temporary barriers in the form of large flowerpots. On the Via Giulia, which threads its way between the delicate baroque façades of small churches and the impressive outlines of medieval palazzi, the municipal government sponsors a series of free evening concerts, ranging from jazz to classical music. Later there will be acrobats and other circus acts in the Piazza Farnese, theatre in the parks and the other piazzas, open-air concerts in the Campidoglio—the so-called Roman Summer that has become an annual feature of life here.

Andrea has never had the inclination or the time to take part in any of these celebrations. At night, when his working day is over, his only thought is to get home. The drive back to the Tiburtina at that hour, between midnight and one o'clock, takes him only about fifteen minutes; there is almost no traffic, and he can count on being in bed by one-thirty or two. The pattern of his life is physically punishing and never varies. He suffers from high blood pressure and aching feet. On Sundays, the only day of the week the Grappolo is closed, he would prefer just to sit around the house until dinnertime. "My family would like to go to the movies, and sometimes we go out, but what I really want to do is sleep," he said recently.

He never eats at home, and Marcella is not expected to cook for him. A few years ago, after his father died, Andrea inherited a small stone house in the hills of Amatrice and has since converted it into a modest country retreat. If he's not too tired, he and the entire family will drive up there and spend Sundays during the warmer months. Every August, the trattoria shuts down for two weeks, and he and Marcella take a vacation. Like millions of other Italians, they used to head either for the mountains or to the seashore, but now they retire to their refuge in Amatrice. "The air is clean and it is peaceful," he says.

Andrea has never attended a concert or visited any of the city's famous sights, and he takes little part in its cultural life. His task, as he sees it, is to provide good food at reasonable prices so that he can go on earning enough money to support himself and his family. He does not feel in the least deprived, nor is he envious of what he feels he cannot have. By every current economic standard, he is living better than the great majority of his fellow-citizens. "Let the politicians talk," he said not long ago. "They love to talk, that is what they do best. For me, it is all rhetoric. Life is hard and work is everything. The rest is dreams."

—William Murray

•

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A CRITIC AT LARGE

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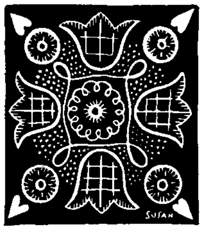
If I were heading for the Amazon and had room in my tropical kit for just one book, my choice would unquestionably be Henry Walter Bates's "The Naturalist on the River Amazons." A hundred and twenty-five years after its first appearance, it remains the basic text, one of the monuments of scientific travel writing, and a celebration of the world's ultimate wilderness in its virgin splendor. I still have my copy—it was my inspiring companion a decade ago, when I spent eight months wandering in that "glorious forest," as Bates called it. There were times when I was way out there, hundreds of miles from anything approaching the modern world, with no familiar cultural referent to cling to except Bates. Shuddering with loneliness, I would recall that Bates spent eleven years in Amazonia, yet only once in his narrative is there a suggestion of the discomfort and homesickness that must at times have been unbearable. This uncharacteristically personal moment—one of the memorable passages in exploration literature—comes after the first of four and a half years he eventually spent in the village of Ega, fourteen hundred miles up the river. There had been no parcels from England since his arrival at Ega, his clothing was worn to rags, he was barefoot ("a great inconvenience in tropical forests," he reports, "notwithstanding statements to the contrary that have been published by travellers"), he had been robbed, and his servant had run off. But the worst of it was that there was nothing left to read. He had read from beginning to end even the advertisements of his few precious copies of the *Athenaeum*. "I was obliged, at last," he writes, with marvellous understatement, "to come to the conclusion that the contemplation of Nature alone is not sufficient to fill the human heart and mind."


SUSAN

But most of the time Bates was lost in wonder, astonished by a diversity he had never imagined possible. While he was staying in Pará (present-day Belém), he found seven hundred species of butterfly within an hour's walk of the town, "whilst the total number found in the British Islands does not exceed sixty-six," and at Ega, where "Nature writes, as on a tablet, the story of the modifications of species," he identified "upwards of seven thousand species of insects," including eighteen species of "true papilio"—swallowtail butterflies—"within ten minutes' walk of my house." Any amount of deprivation and difficulty, he reasoned, was worth putting up with for the privilege of making such discoveries.

The mid-nineteenth century was a remarkable time to be a naturalist. A uniform theory explaining how life on earth had evolved, in all its diversity, had not yet been worked out, and the world's richest and most complex terrestrial ecosystem, the tropical rain forest, had been entered by no more than a handful of people with a Western scientific perspective, its mysteries had not been unravelled (this is still to a great extent the case), its riotous biota was almost completely uncatalogued and unclassified. As often happens in remarkable times, individuals with remarkable qualities appeared—with the stamina, the curiosity, and the powers of observation and extrapolation that were equal to the task. England produced four self-contained and largely self-educated geniuses who became pioneers of tropical biology: Charles Darwin, Alfred Russel Wallace, Henry Walter Bates, and Richard Spruce. They were very different types, but they all knew each other, and corresponded, and sent each other drafts of their scientific papers for comment, and all but Darwin cut their teeth on the Amazon. Darwin and Wallace were, of course, two of the great Victorian minds. Bates and Spruce were lesser figures, but their contributions to science were tremendously important. Darwin, having completed his five-year circumnavigation of the globe on H.M.S. Beagle in 1836 and published his famous journal three years later, had a ten-year start on the others. He was their hero. He had a tremendous volume of data and a brilliant theoretical mind (and a bigger ego than the three others), and he had been working on the theory of natural selection for twenty years when Wallace precipitated the long-delayed publication of "On the Origin of Species" by sending him, in 1858, an outline of the theory which was in some ways clearer than his own version.

Wallace was a magnanimous soul, a truly open mind. He arrived at the theory independently—he always called it Darwinism, and wasn't at all concerned about getting his share of the credit—and yet he felt that there were many things it didn't account for, and (quite correctly, as recent work by Stephen Jay Gould and others has shown) that natural selection wasn't the only explanation for evolutionary change. He and Bates went to the Amazon together when they were in their mid-twenties. Both were ardent entomologists, and their fascination with the beauty and intricacy of insects gradually grew into awe of the entire creation. Wallace was interested in broad zoogeographical patterns; he wasn't afraid of taking speculative flights. Bates was suspicious of sweeping generalities; he was concerned with direct, detailed observation—with what could be seen and verified. Spruce, a botanist, came out to the Amazon three years later, with Wallace's younger brother Herbert, who was quickly carried off by yellow fever. Spruce's task was particularly daunting. In some locales, almost every tree and shrub proved to be a new species. He spent the better part of fourteen years in the Amazon Valley—longer than any of the others. But his name is less known, except in botanical circles, because he never wrote a book, instead devoting the rest of his career to the study of liverworts. After he died, Wallace generously took time from his own work to edit Spruce's journals, which are a trove of botanical and ethnobotanical information. They were published in 1908 as "Notes of a Botanist on the Amazon and Andes."

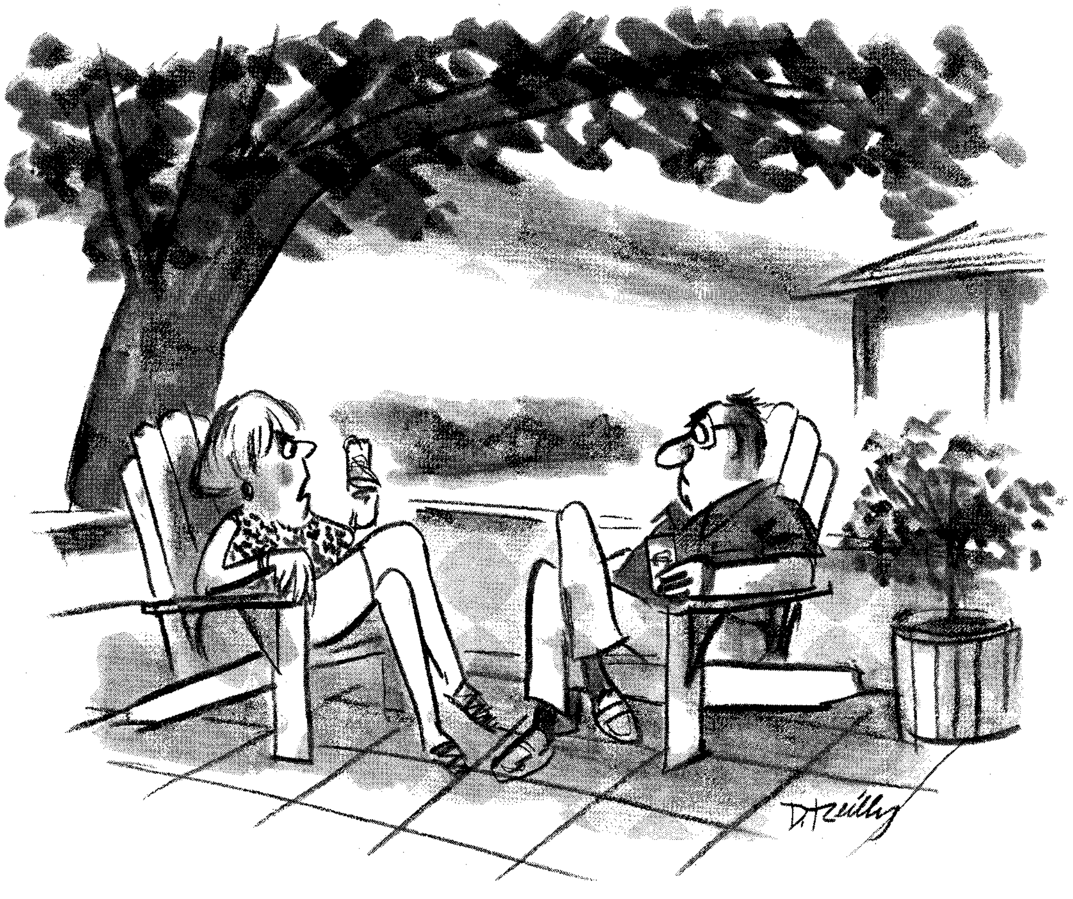
Bates writes that he spent "eleven of the best years of my life" in the Amazon. They were certainly the most exciting. He was born in Leicester in 1825, the eldest son of a hosiery manufacturer, himself the son of a hosiery dyer, and thus he was not, as Darwin was, a child of privilege. His formal education ended at the age of thirteen, whereupon he was apprenticed to a colleague of his father's, for whom he worked thirteen hours a day. He continued to study at night and became, among other things, fluent in Greek. Throughout his life, he was fond of reading Homer in the original, but, unlike many of his contemporaries (Thoreau included), he felt no need to spout the Iliad in his book. He also played the guitar. But his main interest was bugs. On holidays with his younger brother he would comb the nearby Charnwood Forest for specimens. At the age of eighteen, he produced his first contribution to science—a short paper on beetles entitled "On Coleopterous Insects Frequenting Damp Places."

A year or two later, he made the acquaintance of Wallace, a young English master at the Collegiate School in Leicester, who shared his entomological interests. On their outings, they would talk about going abroad to a place that had never been collected—would fantasize about following in the footsteps of Humboldt and Bonpland, who had spent years wandering in South America at the turn of the century—and they would talk about the subversive implications of Darwin's recently published journal and of the writings of the geologist Charles Lyell, whose theory of uniformitarianism challenged the prevailing view that each organism had been made by God in a special, separate act of creation.

But it was the publication, in 1847, of W. H. Edwards' "Voyage up the River Amazon, Including a Residence at Pará," with its descriptions of "the beauty and the grandeur of the vegetation" and the "kindness and hospitality of the people," as Wallace recalled years later in his autobiography, that fired them with a longing to visit the Amazon. A lawyer from New York who also owned railroads and coal mines, Edwards was the grandfather of American lepidopterology. He described more North American butterflies than anyone had before or has since. A meeting with the great man as he was passing through London and a visit to the British Museum, where the two young naturalists saw some exquisite butterflies just collected in Pará, made Bates's mind up: he would chuck his boring job (by now he was an office clerk in Burton-on-Trent) and accept an invitation from Wallace to go with him to the Amazon to collect specimens—the sale of which would pay for the trip—and data "toward solving the problem of the origin of species."

Embarking from Liverpool in a small trading vessel, they reached Pará, at the mouth of the Amazon, in thirty-two days, on May 28, 1848—a quick trip. After eighteen months there, they ascended the Tocantins, the first big right-bank tributary of the Amazon, and then went up the main river to Santarém, where Bates would be headquartered for the next three years. On March 26, 1850, he and Wallace parted company. Whether temperamental or philosophical differences arose between them—*any* differences are quickly magnified in claustrophobic jungle settings—or whether they had merely begun to get on each other's nerves, we will never know; Bates speaks simply of "finding it more convenient to explore separate districts and collect independently."

Wallace went up the Rio Negro, the Amazon's largest tributary (with a discharge four times that of the Mississippi), and *its* tributary the Uaupés. There he glimpsed the fabulous cock of the rock—an umbrella bird with a crest stretching from the tip of the bill to the top of the head—and met some interesting Indians. In 1852, racked with fever and ague, he set sail for England, with a huge collection of specimens, dead and live. The ship caught fire and sank off the Guianas, and he lost everything. A lesser man would have been broken by the disaster, but Wallace wrote a beautiful poem about it, a brilliant book on the palms of the Amazon (almost entirely from memory), and a popular work, "A Narrative of Travels on the Amazon and Rio Negro," which occupies almost as highly respected a place in the literature of the Amazon as Bates's



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book. (Darwin, though, sniped in a letter to Bates, "I was a *little* disappointed in Wallace's book on the Amazon; hardly facts enough.") Then he took off for the Malay Archipelago, where he spent eight years, collecting a hundred and twenty-seven thousand specimens, formulating the theory of natural selection, making fundamental discoveries in biology, geology, geography, and ethnography. His "The Malay Archipelago" (1869) was a great success, and stands with Bates's book as a nineteenth-century classic. The rest of Wallace's life was devoted to an extraordinary range of interests and causes: vaccination, socialism, land nationalization, women's rights. After his years in the Orient, where he found that ancestors continued to play a dominant role in the world of the living, he became fascinated with the idea of communication with the dead. Spiritualism was enjoying a vogue in Victorian England; a group that included Arthur Conan Doyle went regularly to séances. Darwin and Julian Huxley were shocked, but Wallace had no patience with narrow-minded scientists who dismissed avenues of possibility without even examining the evidence. After a long and wonderfully full life, he died in 1913.

AFTER Wallace went home, Bates, though his own health was steadily deteriorating, stuck it out in Amazonia for seven more years. He went up the Tapajós River, which enters the main stream at Santarém, then up to Ega, from which he made forays into Upper Amazonia. Finally, in June of 1859, he, too, racked with the "ague of the country"—almost certainly malaria—bailed out and returned to England. But, unlike Wallace, he made it back with his booty: 14,712 species, no fewer than eight thousand of which were new to science. The precise breakdown was:

52 mammals
360 birds
140 reptiles
120 fish
14,000 insects
35 mollusks
5 zoophytes

In 1855, while Bates was still in Amazonia, Wallace sent him from Malaya a draft of a paper he had written, entitled "On the Law Which Has Regulated the Introduction of

New Species." In it Wallace argued that every species has arisen "coincident both in space and time with a pre-existing closely allied species"—that the diversity of life on earth had not come about as the result of numerous special creations by God. The habitually cautious Bates was somewhat taken aback. He wrote Wallace that while the two of them had often discussed the theory of natural selection (as it would be called), "the theory I quite assent to, and, you know, was conceived by me also, but I profess that I could not have propounded it with so much force and completeness." Wallace, attempting to mollify him, wrote back that the "paper is, of course, only the announcement of the theory, not its development," and that it would actually appear clearer to him than "to persons who have not thought much on the subject." The full development of the theory had to wait four years, until Darwin finally brought out "On the Origin of Species." The book was published in November, and, unlike Wallace's paper, it caused an immediate furor. Bates had returned that summer. He read the book and was an instant convert. At last, he thought as he fell to work sorting out his Amazonian specimens, there was a unifying framework.

One of the most common forms of butterfly in Amazonia is a lazily flapping, elongate, two-tone (usually brown-and-yellow or red-and-blue) type, of which Bates had caught many examples. As he examined them, he noticed that some were heliconians, a foul-smelling and unpalatable group, avoided by birds because of the chemicals they absorb as caterpillars from their food plant—the passionflower vine. But others were Dismorphia—a completely different family. They were perfectly palatable, but in flight were indistinguishable from the heliconians and therefore were also left alone by birds. This was just one of many mimetic complexes that Bates discovered not only among the insects of the Amazon but also among the birds and reptiles. The sole satisfactory mechanism he could come up with to explain these convergences was natural selection—"the selective agents being insectivorous animals which gradually destroy those sports [as mutations were then called] or varieties which are not sufficiently like [the protected species] to deceive them," as he wrote in a now famous paper entitled "Contributions to an Insect Fauna of the Amazons Valley. Lepidoptera: Heliconiidae," which was published in 1862.

The paper contained some of the first sophisticated insights into tropical biology and provided some of the first indications of the complexity of the rain forest. Darwin was delighted by it, because the paper was, as Bates himself had remarked, "a most beautiful proof of natural selection," and he hailed it as "one of the most remarkable and admirable papers I ever read in my life." He wrote Bates, "I am rejoiced that I passed over the whole subject [of mimicry] in the 'Origin,' for I should have made a precious mess of it." This type of mimicry—a palatable species mimicking an unpalatable one—became known as Batesian mimicry. Many other types have since been identified. In Müllerian mimicry, for example, some unpalatable species converge on the same color pattern, producing the same aposematic, or warning, coloration. In Mertensian mimicry, a palatable and a highly toxic species both come to resemble a moderately toxic model. Many butterflies are "automimics": one may have false eyespots on its wings, say, to fool birds into snapping at a part of its body that it can better afford to lose than its head. Camouflage and crypsis—keeping a low profile—are favorite survival strategies in the rain forest: moths simulate leaves, and snakes look like vines. It is as if the rain forest were a dangerous, riotous carnival, and everyone who would dance in it must wear a costume.

Darwin urged Bates to write a memoir of his years in the Amazon and introduced him to the publisher John Murray, and in 1863 Murray brought out Bates's "The Naturalist on the River Amazons." (Bates preferred a literal translation of the river's Portuguese name, Rio Amazonas. The Amazons were a legendary female tribe said to have attacked the first Europeans to navigate the river.) The book was a tremendous success. It went through many editions and was translated into several languages. Darwin wrote Bates, "It is the best work of Natural History Travels ever published in England. Your style seems to me admirable. Nothing can be better than the discussion on the struggle for

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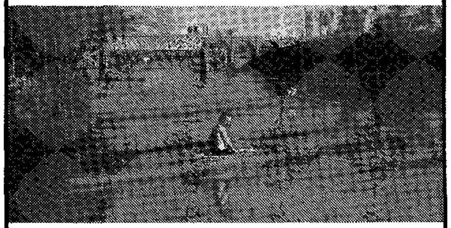

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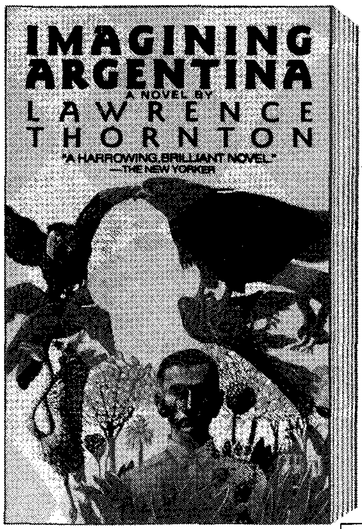

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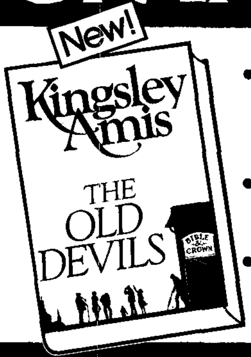

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existence, and nothing better than the description of the Forest scenery. It is a grand book, and whether or not it sells quickly, it will last." John Gould, the American ornithologist and bird painter, who had been yearning to go to the Amazon, wrote, "Bates, I have read your book—I've seen the Amazons." Bates, typically, deprecated the achievement. He said he would rather spend another eleven years in the jungle than have to go through the ordeal of writing another book. That year, he married Sara Ann Mason, of Leicester. They had three sons, two of whom were to become farmers in New Zealand.

The following year, just when everything was going so well, Bates suffered a blow. He applied for a post in the Zoological Department of the British Museum, for which he was superbly qualified, but the position went to a poet who knew absolutely nothing about zoology but was a friend of someone on the museum's board of directors. Two years later, with the strong backing of Murray, he was appointed assistant secretary of the Royal Geographical Society. Though he would have preferred the scientific job, he stayed at the society for twenty-eight years, editing its transactions, and supervising its daily operations and the publication of several important books, including Peter E. Warburton's "Journey Across the Western Interior of Australia." His latter years were filled with honor. The Emperor of Brazil, for example, awarded him the Brazilian Order of the Rose, which was only rarely bestowed on foreigners. He was plagued by dyspepsia, as were both Darwin and Huxley, and he died, of bronchitis, on February 16, 1892. He left many of his butterflies to the British Museum, and his magnificent beetle collection was bought by a Frenchman, Charles Oberthür, one of the big names in turn-of-the-century entomology.

That is all I have been able to learn about this intensely private, self-effacing Englishman. Questions that pique the modern curiosity, such as whether he remained a detached observer, in the British manner—"a solitary stranger on a strange errand," as he described himself—all those eleven years, without succumbing to the charms of the women of Amazonia, are unanswerable. He certainly had an eye for feminine beauty. He writes of buxom *mulata* women and "frank and smiling" Indian girls with "nearly perfect figures," and a passage near the beginning of his book betrays more of a literary than a scientific sensibility: "Amongst them [groups of people cooling themselves outside their doors] were several handsome women, dressed in a slovenly manner, barefoot or shod in loose slippers; but wearing richly decorated ear-rings, and around their necks strings of very large gold beads. They had dark expressive eyes, and remarkably rich heads of hair. It was a mere fancy, but I thought the mingled squalor, luxuriance and beauty of these women were pointedly in harmony with the rest of the scene; so striking, in the view, was the mixture of natural riches and human poverty." The recent appearance of the octogenarian Eskimo sons of the polar explorers Robert Peary and Matthew Henson suggests that Victorians in the field were not as celibate as has generally been supposed.

THE charm—and the genius—of Bates's book is that he does not restrict himself to cataloguing the natural history; he observes and is interested in everything. The subtitle gives an idea of the work's breadth: "A Record of Adventures, Habits of Animals, Sketches of Brazilian and Indian Life, and Aspects of Nature Under the Equator, During Eleven Years of Travel." Today is the era of the specialized scientist, who is reluctant to think about things that are not in his discipline, but in Bates's day the boundaries of the disciplines had not yet been drawn. Omnivorous curiosity was expected of the explorer. Humboldt's mind, for instance, was a vessel and a computer of monumental capacity; his "Voyage to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent" runs to twenty-three volumes. Like Humboldt, Bates responded to and gave equal time to the people. (It is very hard not to respond to the Amazonians, who are among the friendliest people on earth.) His view of nature included man and his works; it was more Shakespearean than Thoreauvian. This breadth of interest separated him, as Darwin pointed out, from "the mob of naturalists without souls."

As a result, not only do we meet in his pages the most varied assemblage of life on earth—including hyacinthine macaws, hairstreak butterflies, finch-eating spiders, curl-crested toucans (the engraving of the bespectacled Bates mobbed by these birds is one of the famous nineteenth-century images of the jungle), trogons, jacamars, sloths, troupials, fire ants, army ants, anacondas, piranhas ("As soon as any offal fell from the canoe, the water was blackened with the shoals that rushed instantaneously to the spot"), manatees, scarlet-faced ouakaris, and leonine marmosets—but we also meet the various racial and cultural mixtures of Amazonia: mulattoes; *mamelucos* (white and Indian); *cafuzos* (Indian and African); *tapuyos*, or detribalized Indians; and the *mestiço* river people, who are now known as *caboclos*, and many of whom still live as Bates found them, except that they have shotguns, radios, outboard motors, and a few other modern goods. There are fascinating passages on the use of the fish-stupefying *timbo* vine, on how the Tikuna Indians buried their chiefs ("the knees doubled up, in large jars under the floor of their huts"), on geophagy (the curious practice of eating dirt), on cannibalism, on the use of the *zarabatana*, or blowgun, on bow-hunting for river turtles, on head-shrinking among the Mundurucú (a practice they have since given up). We hear about a bogeyman called the Curupíra—the Amazonian Bigfoot—who lives deep in the forest, has backward-pointing feet to throw off trackers, and is held responsible for such inexplicable sounds in the night as sudden crashes, piercing cries, sounds "like the clang of an iron bar against a hard, hollow tree." We learn of a monstrous serpent called the Mai d'Agua—the Amazonian Nessie—and are told of the Amazonians' fear of the *bôto*, or freshwater dolphin, which persists to this day. Bates's informants told him that the *bôto* assumed the shape of a beautiful woman, "with hair hanging loose to her heels," who enticed young men close to the water, never to be seen again. (Mine claimed that it becomes a man who steals ashore at night, and accounts for embarrassing pregnancies and venereal diseases, and babies with birth defects.)

We sail with Bates in various types of now extinct sailing craft—the *montaria*, the *cuberta*, the *igarité*. We feel the excruciatingly itchy bite of the *pium*, a small gnat that is one of the scourges of Amazonia: "In places

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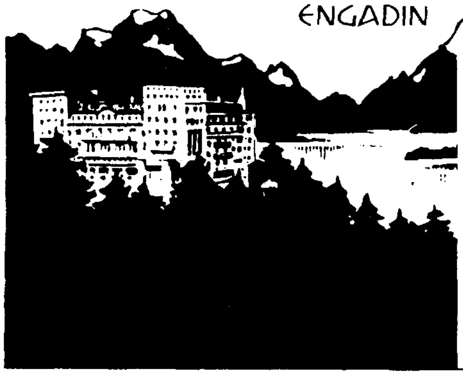

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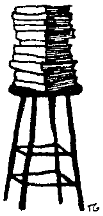

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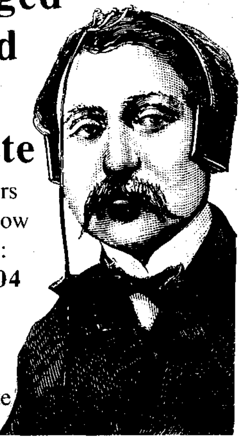

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where it is abundant, it accompanies canoes in such dense swarms as to resemble thin clouds of smoke." We nearly die of yellow fever with him: "I was seized with shivering and vomit at nine o'clock in the morning. . . . I took a good draught of a decoction of elder blossoms as a sudorific and soon after fell insensible into my hammock."

The best natural descriptions have a dreamlike quality, which can hardly have been intended yet faithfully mirrors the shadowy world beneath the jungle canopy. Here is Bates running into a boa constrictor: "On seeing me the reptile suddenly turned, and glided at an accelerated rate down the path. . . . The rapidly moving and shining body looked like a stream of brown liquid flowing over the thick bed of fallen leaves." The natural histories of various organisms which are the core of the book are still fundamentally sound, though many of the Latin names have changed. Bates thought that the leaf-cutter ants carry back shreds of leaf to their mounds to thatch the mounds' roofs and keep their young broods dry. It has since been learned that the leaves are used as mulch to grow subterranean gardens of fungi, on which the ants subsist. More serious flaws are the occasional remarks, perfectly acceptable—indeed, almost mandatory—in those days, on the intellectual inferiority of Indians and people of mixed race; and pronouncements on the fertility of the soil, like "The country [of Pará] is covered with forests, and the soil fertile in the extreme, even for a tropical country." Actually, the soils of Amazonia, and tropical soils in general, tend to be thin and poor. The lushness that Bates assumed to be a product of the soil results from a delicate balancing act: the rain forest exists mainly on water and air and the frenetic recycling of nutrients from leaf litter and decaying wood on the forest floor back up into the trees.

Reading Bates is an emotional experience for someone who has travelled in Amazonia, because much of what he describes so poignantly is no longer there. In his day, the village of Alter do Chão was a few sleepy huts on the right bank of the Tapajós River, lined in the dry season with miles of beautiful white sand beach, and it was still that way when I spent a memorable afternoon there in the fall of 1977, swimming and drinking cashew liqueur. I filed the place away in my mind. It became my secret, my ace in the hole, the first place I would head for when I finally gave up trying to fit into the modern world. In the summer of 1984, I happened to be back in the vicinity, and I took a bus out to Alter do Chão to see how it was doing. The place was unrecognizable. There were new streets with white villas, and on the beach were thousands of teen-age Amazonians, drinking Coke, water-skiing, bombing around in open jeeps with roll bars, moonwalking to Michael Jackson tapes. With the completion of the Transamazon Highway and the discovery of gold in that part of the Amazon, progress had come overnight, and no one was looking back.

I felt then the same kind of anguish that Bates felt when, after an absence of seven and a half years upriver, he returned to Pará and found his favorite forests cleared. "The noble forest trees had been cut down, and their naked half-burnt stems remained in the midst of ashes, muddy puddles, and heaps of broken branches," he wrote. Steamboats had begun to ply the river in his absence, foreign merchants had arrived, and the city was four times as expensive. Bates couldn't afford it anymore. The citizens were pathetically imitating Portuguese and French dress and customs, and abandoning their wonderful folk traditions and religious festivals. Bates felt deep misgivings about returning to civilization. In his famous closing passage he wrote, "Pictures of startling clearness rose up of . . . factory chimneys and crowds of grimy operatives, rung to work in early morning by factory bells; of union workhouses, confined rooms, artificial cares, and slavish conventionalities. . . . It was natural to feel a little dismayed at the prospect of so great a change." —ALEX SHOUMATOFF

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NO COMMENT DEPARTMENT

[*From the Portland Oregonian*]

Meanwhile, some 60 pro-North marchers held their own rally nearby, featuring signs such as "Pardon North—Indict the Linders," a reference to the family of Ben Linder, a former Portlander killed in Nicaragua last year. The supporters played flutes and guitars while stressing the broad base of their point of view.

"All Republicans aren't white people," said Sharon Caldwell of Newberg. "We have all kinds of people here—blacks, Hispanics, Jews and the hearing impaired."

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